

L. S. Sepers

AN
EXAMINATION
OF THE
Statutes
NOW IN FORCE RELATING
TO THE
ASSIZE OF BREAD;
WITH
REMARKS ON THE BILL
INTENDED TO BE BROUGHT INTO PARLIAMENT
BY THE
COUNTRY BAKERS.

BY JAMES NASMITH, D.D.

ONE OF HIS MAJESTY'S JUSTICES OF THE PEACE FOR
THE COUNTY OF CAMBRIDGE AND ISLE OF ELY.

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TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE
PHILIP
EARL OF HARDWICKE,
LORD LIEUTENANT
OF THE
COUNTY OF CAMBRIDGE,
THIS TRACT
IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED
BY HIS LORDSHIP'S
MOST OBEDIENT HUMBLE SERVANT,
JAMES NASMITH.



AN
EXAMINATION,
Ec. Ec.

CHAP. I.

Introduction.

IN a season of scarcity, as the pressure is universally felt, so are the minds of men naturally turned to the causes from whence that scarcity has arisen. The labourer returning from the Village Shop with the diminutive loaf to satisfy the craving appetites of a numerous family, wonders how the quantity he used to purchase for the same money should have thus rapidly decreased; and, unskilled in calculation, he suspects there must be some other cause than a scanty harvest, and that the avarice of man has joined to increase the sufferings inflicted by providence. If he applies for information, he can only be told that the price of Bread is fixed by the Magistrates according to a certain Table established by Law: but by what rules that Table was constructed, what proportion of profit is allowed to the Baker, and whether that proportion be no more than the due reward of his labour; or whether the public distress brings with it an increase

of gain to him, and he enriches himself most in seasons of general calamity, are questions which few are prepared to resolve. Suspicion ever accompanies ignorance: and while men do not know what the Baker is allowed, they will ever be prone to suppose the allowance extravagant.

My intention is to enquire into the Principles on which the Tables of Assize in the Statutes of 31 *Geo.* 2. c. 29. and 13 *Geo.* 3. c. 62 have been formed: to investigate how far they uniformly adhere or deviate from these principles: to point out how the irregularities, for such will be found to exist, affect the prices or weight of bread: and to point out the means of remedying these irregularities, and correcting the Tables so as to make them strictly conformable to their principles.

And because objections have been brought against the very principles on which the present Tables are constructed, I shall consider how a New and General Table may be formed, not liable to the same objections.

CHAP. II.

*Of the Principles on which the Tables of
Assize are constructed.*

THE Standard which regulates the Sale of Bread is the Bushel of Wheat, which as it rises or falls in value, proportionally increases or diminishes the price or weight of the Loaf. The Baker, for his labour, expence, and profit, has an allowance on the Bushel of Corn, the fixing of which allowance is left to the discretion of the Magistrates, and it is now generally 1s. 6d. per bushel. The amount of these two articles, that is of the price of the Bushel of Wheat, and the allowance to the Baker for baking it, forms the first column in the tables of Assize.

Loaves are baked of two descriptions, distinguished in the Statutes by the names of Assized Bread and Prized Bread. The Assized Loaves always sell at the same price, such as Penny Loaves, Two-penny Loaves, &c. but vary in weight with the varying price of the Bushel of Wheat: the Prized Loaves, better known by their

usual appellations of Peck Loaves, Half Peck Loaves, and Quarter Peck Loaves, are always respectively of the same determinate weight, and are regulated in price by the price of wheat. The remaining columns of the Assize Tables contain, first, the weight of the Assize Loaves, and next the prices of the Prized Loaves.

Now, before the weight of the one, or the prices of the other, can be calculated from the price of the Bushel of Wheat, it is necessary to ascertain what proportion the price of the Bushel of Wheat bears to the Price of the Sack of Flour, and what proportion the weight of the Sack of Flour bears to the weight of the Bread made from it. Let us first seek information from the Statute.

“ Magistrates and Justices, within their several
 “ jurisdictions, being to set the Assize and fix the
 “ Price of the several Loaves of Bread, having
 “ respect to the Price which the Grain, Meal or
 “ Flour of which the same are made shall bear in
 “ the Market, but no provision being made how
 “ they shall know what price the respective sorts of
 “ Meal and Flour should be esteemed to bear, in
 “ proportion to the price of Wheat, they are there-
 “ fore to take notice, That the Peck Loaf of each
 “ sort of Bread is to weigh, when well baked,
 “ 17^{lb.} 6oz. Avoirdupoise, and the rest in propor-
 “ tion; and that every Sack of Meal or Flour is

“ to weigh 2 cwt. 2 qrs. nett, and that from every
 “ Sack of Meal or Flour there ought to be pro-
 “ duced 20 such Peck Loaves of Bread; and by
 “ observing the said rule, Magistrates and Justices
 “ may at all times know if the Baker hath more or
 “ less than the allowance they intend to give him.”

It has been alledged by a respectable writer on this subject, that though we have here given us the proportion between the weights of the Sack of Flour and of the 20 Peck Loaves of Bread baked from it, we are still left entirely in the dark as to the proportional prices of the Bushel of Wheat and Sack of Flour: he considers this point as intentionally left in obscurity, and says, “ it seems to
 “ have been a secret *too valuable* to be entrusted to
 “ the public or *even* to the legislature.” I apprehend this seeming omission in the Statute to have arisen, not from the artifice of the Bakers, but from this proportion being then generally known, though it be now sunk in oblivion, and the proportion that then existed very materially changed by the many changes and improvements which have taken place in the manufacturing of Flour. But if I am herein mistaken, and the Bakers both drew up the Table of Assize, and also studiously endeavoured to conceal from the knowledge of the public on what proportion between the respective prices of Flour and Wheat it was calculated, they appear to me to have been very bungling contrivers. The learned

writer, whom I have before quoted, has thought it necessary to inform his readers in a note, that “four-sevenths of 36 is four times 36 divided by “seven.” Now, if he imagines the Bench of Magistrates or Justices to be usually formed of men to whom explanations of this sort are necessary, I readily allow the problem to be beyond their solution, and I will further allow that it would be natural for such men to mistake the Peck of Flour for the Peck of Wheat, and to be surprised to find that Four Peck Loaves of Wheaten Bread cannot be made from the Bushel of Wheat. But if there be such a Bench existing, either in borough or county, it is to be hoped, that instead of bewildering their understandings with a matter too hard for them, they would call to their assistance some better head than their own; and if they proposed the question to the schoolmaster or exciseman of the town, either would tell them, “Seek in the Table the “price of the Peck Loaf, compute what 20 such “Loaves sell for at that price, which is what the “Sack of Flour produces to the Baker when “baked and sold in Loaves of that size: divide “the amount of the 20 Loaves by the Sum in the “first column of the Table correspondent to the “price of the Peck Loaf, and the quotient will “give you the proportion which the Price of the “Sack of Flour in the judgement of the calculators of the Table bears to the price of the “Bushel of Wheat.” I have entered into this

detail to rescue a useful body of men from the suspicions incautiously raised against them by this worthy and intelligent author, who unfortunately setting out on a mistaken supposition that the denomination of Peck when applied to the Loaf had a reference to the Measure of Corn and not of Flour, has employed four pages to shew that Four Peck Loaves of Wheaten Bread cannot be made from the Bushel of Wheat, but that the table allows a Bushel and an half; this he supposes the Magistrate not aware of, and concludes that the Baker receives half as much again as it was intended to allow him. Now this is to suppose, that for nearly half a century the Magistrates have been blind fools, and the Bakers designing knaves, who have imposed upon them with impunity. But surely it is more reasonable, and will better agree with the opinion the public would wish to entertain of the ability of the Magistrates, and the integrity of the trade, to suppose that the Legislature, when it directed the Magistrates to give the Baker an allowance on the Bushel of Wheat for baking, meant he should receive that allowance for every Bushel of Wheat used; and that whatever number of bushels and parts of a bushel are equivalent in value to the Sack of Flour, the same number of allowances and parts of an allowance are to be given to the baker for baking it. For instance, if in Wheaten Bread the proportion between the respective prices of the Sack of Flour and the Bushel of Wheat is, as will

be presently shewn, that of $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 1, then it was the intention of the legislature that the allowance for baking the Sack should be $7\frac{1}{2}$ times that granted on the Bushel of Wheat, and therefore, when the latter is 1s. 6d. the former will be 11s. 3d. But of the allowance to the baker I shall treat more largely in another place; I now return to the investigation of the relative values of the several kinds of Flour compared with the bushel of wheat, as assumed for the foundation of these Tables.

To begin with Wheaten Bread: when the Bushel of Wheat is at 4s. and the baker's allowance is 1s. 6d. the correspondent price of the Peck Loaf is 2s. 1d. Twenty Peck Loaves, therefore, sell for 41s. 8d. this sum divided by 5s. 6d. gives $7\frac{1}{3}$ or somewhat exceeding $7\frac{1}{2}$ d. If the trial be repeated when Wheat is at different prices, the result will still be 7 and a fraction, varying in value, but always somewhat greater than an half. Now if the very next line of the table be inspected, when Wheat is advanced to 4s. 3d. the bushel, making, with the allowance to the baker, 5s. 9d. we shall find the correspondent price of the Peck Loaf to be 2s. $2\frac{1}{2}$ d. and that of the Quartern Loaf only $6\frac{1}{2}$ d. where the Peck Loaf exceeds in price four Quarter Peck Loaves by $\frac{1}{2}$ d. many similar irregularities will appear on the most cursory view of the Table; it may, therefore, without risk of error, be inferred, that the varying excess of the pro-

portion found above that of $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 1, is entirely owing to the irregularities of the table, and that $7\frac{1}{2}$ to 1 is the proportion on which it was calculated.

In the same table with the weights and prices of Wheaten Bread, are given those of Household Bread, and "the Wheaten Loaves," saith the Statute, "are three-fourths of the weight of the Household Loaves, and the prices of the Household Loaves are always three-fourths of the prices of the Wheaten Loaves." The respective values of the different kinds of Flour of which Wheaten and Household Bread are made being thus fixt in the proportion of 4 to 3, the proportion of the respective prices of the Sack of Household Flour and of the Bushel of Wheat will be as $5\frac{5}{8}$ to 1. For as $4:3::7\frac{1}{2}:5\frac{5}{8}$. If, to verify this result, we apply the preceding rule, we shall find that when the bushel and baker's allowance is 6s. the price of the Peck Loaf is 1s. $8\frac{1}{2}d.$ and consequently 20 Peck Loaves sell for 34s. $2d.$ divide by 6, and the quotient will be $5\frac{4}{7}$ exceeding $5\frac{5}{8}$ by $\frac{4}{7}$ or $\frac{1}{1.8}$, and wherever the trial is made, a similar excess, sometimes greater and sometimes less, but always inconsiderable, will be found, and may be ascribed to the same cause as the like excess in the former part of the table.

Besides Wheaten and Household Bread, the statute of 31 Geo. 2. also mentions White Bread; but it is considered as a luxury, the use of which is

made to depend on the permission of the Magistrates, and it is supposed to be made only in loaves of a small size, for the breakfast or tea-tables of the opulent, and all the direction given concerning it is, that "if the Magistrates or Justices shall think
 " fit to allow of any White Loaves of the price of
 " 1*d.* or 2*d.* they are to weigh at all times three-
 " fourths of the weight of the Wheaten Loaves of
 " the same price." The price of articles of luxury is not the object of this enquiry; and if the baker has, as would probably be found on examination, very considerable profit, as well on this White Bread as on sundry small articles not subject to the Affize, which are baked and sold by many of the trade, it seems good policy by granting him larger gain on superfluities to compensate the very moderate profit to which he must necessarily be confined on articles of general consumption.

Besides the table regulating the weights and prices of loaves of wheaten and household bread, the statute of 31 *Geo.* 2. contains a second table of the affize and prices of Bread made of Rye, Barley, Oats, Beans, or Mallin, which table "is framed for Bread to be
 " made of the whole produce of the said several
 " grains, except the bran or hull thereof only." On examination of this table I find the respective proportions of the price of the Sack of Meal or Flour to that of the bushel of the grain from whence it is made, to be as follows, Rye $7\frac{1}{3}$ to 1,

Barley $6\frac{3}{4}$ to 1, Oats $14\frac{2}{3}$ to 1, Beans $5\frac{1}{2}$ to 1, Maflin $6\frac{2}{3}$ to 1.

The Statute further enacts, that no Bread of inferior quality to Wheaten Bread shall be sold at a higher price than Household Bread, and the explanatory act of 3 Geo. 3. c. 2. expressly prohibits Justices from allowing the making for sale or selling “any sorts of assize bread made of the flour or meal of wheat, other than and besides Wheaten and Household Bread, and loaves of white bread of 2d. or under.” But by a subsequent act 13 Geo. 3. c. 62. the use of bread of an intermediate quality called Standard Wheaten Bread is permitted, and a table established regulating the weight and price of loaves of this denomination: in which the proportion of the respective prices of the sack of flour and bushel of wheat is that of $6\frac{2}{3}$ to 1.

And by an act passed in the 36th year of the King, a bread inferior to household is permitted, made from the whole produce of the wheat; 5lb. of coarse bran, to be taken from each bushel, excepted: but for fixing the assize and price of such bread, reference is made to former statutes.

CHAP. III.

*The Price Tables examined and corrected.*

HAVING determined the principles on which the tables are formed, the next object of enquiry is how far they regularly adhere to these principles; and whether the baker, at the prices therein set, and the weights therein established, receives no more than the allowance for baking granted by the Magistrates on the bushel of wheat or other grain of which the bread is made. If the tables should be found to be calculated with such laxity as to give the baker an increase of profit beyond that allowance, then they ought to be reformed; for the Magistrates can never adequately judge what allowance to fix, if the baker has another and latent source of gain, the extent of which cannot be ascertained but by a tedious calculation. I shall begin the enquiry with the Price Tables, the first of which is to be found in Stat. 31 Geo. 2. c. 29. for although Peck, Half Peck, and Quarter Peck Loaves had long before been in use, yet till then there had been no law which regulated the prices at which they should be sold. This deficiency seems to have been heretofore supplied by the general powers vested in the Magistrates "to regulate the baking

“ of bread and all things concerning the same,” and Stat. 3 *Geo. 2. c. 29.* confirmed the exercise of these powers by enacting a penalty against selling at a higher price than should be fixed by the assize, though prized loaves are not mentioned in the table of assize established by Stat. 8 *Ann, c. 18,* then in force.

I am unacquainted what rules these subordinate authorities followed in regulating the prices: I return, therefore, to the examining of those fixed by the statutes now in force: and this examination will be carried on in a series of tables, each of which will be divided into six columns.

Column 1 is the same as the first column in the Assize Table of the statute, and contains the price of the bushel of wheat, or other grain, and the allowance for baking the same.

Column 2 is the price of the sack of flour or meal, and allowance for baking, calculated from the first columns in the respective proportions mentioned in the preceding chapter.

Column 3 contains the price of the Quarter Peck Loaf, or Peck Loaf, where the inferior size is not included in the table in the statute.

Column 4 shews the amount of 80 Quarter Peck Loaves, or 20 Peck Loaves, which is what the

baker receives for a whole sack of flour, when baked and sold in loaves of those sizes.

Column 5 is the difference between the fourth and the second columns, which, when the former exceeds, as is nearly the universal case, the excess is so much increase of profit to the baker beyond his fixed allowance: in the few instances where the produce is less than the price of the sack of flour and baking, the deficiency is distinguished by an asterisk.

Column 6 shews the corrected price, by which the table may be rendered strictly consonant to the principles on which it was calculated: where no alteration is requisite, the column is left blank.

Table 1.—Wheaten Bread.

Price of Bushel & Baking.		Price of Sack of Flour and Baking.		Price of Quarter Peck Loaf		Eighty do.		Increase of Profit.		Corrected Price.	
s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
4	9	35	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	36	8	1	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	5 $\frac{1}{4}$
5	0	37	6	0	5 $\frac{1}{4}$	38	4	0	10		
5	3	39	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	6	40	0	0	7 $\frac{1}{2}$		
5	6	41	3	0	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	41	8	0	5		
5	9	43	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	43	4	0	2 $\frac{1}{2}$		
6	0	45	0	0	7	46	8	1	8	0	6 $\frac{1}{4}$
6	3	46	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	48	4	1	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	7
6	6	48	9	0	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	50	0	1	3	0	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
6	9	50	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	51	8	1	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
7	0	52	6	0	8	53	4	0	10		
7	3	54	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	55	0	0	7 $\frac{1}{2}$		
7	6	56	3	0	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	56	8	0	5		
7	9	58	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	58	4	0	2 $\frac{1}{2}$		
8	0	60	0	0	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	61	8	1	8	0	9
8	3	61	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	63	4	1	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	9 $\frac{1}{4}$
8	6	63	9	0	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	65	0	1	3	0	9 $\frac{1}{2}$
8	9	65	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	10	66	8	1	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	9 $\frac{1}{4}$
9	0	67	6	0	10 $\frac{1}{4}$	68	4	0	10		
9	3	69	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	70	0	0	7 $\frac{1}{2}$		
9	6	71	3	0	10 $\frac{1}{4}$	71	8	0	5		
9	9	73	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	11	73	4	0	2 $\frac{1}{2}$		
10	0	75	0	0	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	76	8	1	8	0	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
10	3	76	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	78	4	1	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
10	6	78	9	1	0	80	0	1	3	0	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
10	9	80	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	0 $\frac{1}{4}$	81	8	1	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	0
11	0	82	6	1	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	83	4	0	10		
11	3	84	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	0 $\frac{1}{4}$	85	0	0	7 $\frac{1}{2}$		
11	6	86	3	1	1	86	8	0	5		
11	9	88	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	90	0	1	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
12	0	90	0	1	1 $\frac{1}{4}$	91	8	1	8	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
12	3	91	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	2	93	4	1	5 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
12	6	93	9	1	2 $\frac{1}{4}$	95	0	1	3	1	2
12	9	95	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	96	8	1	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
13	0	97	6	1	3	100	0	2	6	1	2 $\frac{1}{4}$
13	3	99	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	101	8	2	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	3
13	6	101	3	1	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	103	4	2	1	1	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
13	9	103	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	105	0	1	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
14	0	105	0	1	4	106	8	1	8	1	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
14	3	106	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	110	0	3	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	4
14	6	108	9	1	5	113	4	4	7	1	4 $\frac{1}{4}$

This and the following tables begin when the price of the bushel of wheat and baking is 4s. 9d. that is, the baker's allowance being 1s. 6d. when the quarter of wheat is at 26s. below which price it is not probable it should ever fall, and therefore the upper part of the tables in the statutes may be considered as become obsolete and no longer of any use. The examination is also confined to the price of the Quarter Peck, or where the tables include no other, of the Peck Loaf, for two reasons, because the sale is chiefly of Quarter Peck Loaves, Half Peck and Peck Loaves being rarely, if ever, baked: and because, if the tables in the statutes should undergo a revision, the Legislature would probably render them conformable to the directions in statute 3 Geo. 3. c. 2. whereby it is enacted, that in places where no assize of bread is set, "every peck, half peck, quarter of peck, " and half quarter of peck loaf of wheaten bread " shall be sold in proportion to each other as to " price, and the like as to household bread." Now this proportion cannot be observed but by either first computing the price of the quarter peck loaf, and then making the price of the half peck loaf double, and that of the peck loaf quadruple of it: and as to half quarter peck loaves, " the prices of " such, if sold singly, may be half a farthing higher " than is allowed by the table, when it shall happen " that the farthing is split." (29 Geo. 2. c. 29). or by beginning with the peck loaf excluding all

fractions of a penny from its price, and determining the prices of the half and quarter peck loaves by division.

This proportion has been greatly neglected in the tables now in force: and it does not seem to have been broken through always in favor of the purchaser, that he might buy the larger loaf somewhat cheaper than those of a lesser size, but he is in some instances obliged to pay at a higher rate for the former than for the latter.

From the fifth column of the preceding table it appears, that the increase of profit to the baker beyond his stated allowance on a sack of flour baked and sold in quarter peck loaves, is on an average 1s. $3\frac{1}{4}d.$ but if the calculation be made on the twelve last prices of the table only, it amounts on them to 2s. $0\frac{1}{2}d.$ And thus is the price unnecessarily enhanced when bread is the dearest, and consequently the ability of the lower ranks of society to answer the demand the least. On loaves of a larger size this inequality is not quite so great: but the average increase of profit through the whole table is, on the half peck loaves, 1s. $1\frac{3}{4}d.$ on the peck loaves 1s. $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ in the sack.

Having discovered the evil, the remedy is next to be sought: if we attend to the two first columns of the preceding table, we shall find that when the

bushel of wheat advances $3d.$ the price of the sack of flour increases $1s. 10\frac{1}{2}d.$ an addition of one farthing to the price of the quarter peck loaf is only $1s. 8d.$ on the sack; and therefore the second and fourth column cannot be made exactly to tally, but when the sum in the second column is some multiple of $20d.$ and this can happen only one time in eight. For it is evident, that while the price of the bushel increases $2s.$ by eight equal advances, and that of the sack of flour $15s.$ by eight like advances, the price of the quarter peck loaf must advance nine farthings, which can only be done by seven advances of one farthing each, and one double advance of an halfpenny. If this double advance be made the first in the eight, the increase of profit to the baker will, through the eight be a series of arithmetical progression, beginning with $17\frac{1}{2}d.$ and ending with 0 , the sum of which being $70d.$ his average increase of profit would be $8\frac{3}{4}d.$ which is little more than half what he has from the present affize. But if the double advance was made the last of the eight, the series would then be inverted, and would be wholly in diminution of his stated allowance, which would be lessened on an average $8\frac{3}{4}d.$ in the sack. The first method would (though in a less degree than the present affize) be injurious to the public, the second to the baker. But if the double advance be the fourth in order, then, on the first three, the baker's allowance will be diminished by the several sums of $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ $5d.$ and $7\frac{1}{2}d.$

and increased in the next four by 10d. $7\frac{1}{2}d.$ 5d. and $2\frac{1}{2}d.$ and at the eighth advance the sum arising from the sale of 80 quarter peck loaves will again be exactly equal to the price of the sack of flour and the allowance for baking. And on the whole the baker will, on the average, have no more than $1\frac{1}{4}d.$ per sack beyond that allowance.

This method of making the fourth advance in the eight a double one, has been followed in calculating the corrected prices. And to avoid repetition, let it be observed, that both in the preceding and following tables regarding priced loaves, the prices have been corrected by one general rule. *Instead of the amount of the price of the sack of flour and allowance for baking, take the multiple of 20d. nearest to it in value, and from thence calculate the price of the quarter peck loaf; but where the sum differs equally from two multiples, exceeding the lesser, and falling short of the greater by 10d. there make your calculation from the greater.* This rule will always give the general average in favor of the baker, though in the least degree possible.

Table 2.—Household Bread.

Price of Bushel & Baking.		Price of Sack of Flour and Baking.		Price of Quarter Peck Loaf		Eighty do.		Increase Eight.		Corrected Price.	
s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
4	9	26	8	0	4	26	8 ³	0	0		
5	0	28	1	0	4 ¹	28	4	0	2		
5	3	29	6	0	4 ¹	30	0	0	5 ¹		
5	6	30	11	0	4 ¹	31	8	0	8 ³		
5	9	32	4	0	5	33	4	0	11 ¹	0	4 ³
6	0	33	9	0	5 ¹	35	0	1	3	0	5 ¹
6	3	35	2	0	5 ¹	36	8	1	6	0	5 ¹
6	6	36	6	0	5 ¹	36	8	0	1 ¹		
6	9	37	11	0	5 ¹	38	4	0	4 ¹		
7	0	39	4	0	6	40	0	0	7 ¹		
7	3	40	9	0	6 ¹	41	8	0	10 ¹	0	6
7	6	42	2	0	6 ¹	43	4	1	1	0	6 ¹
7	9	43	7	0	6 ¹	45	0	1	4 ¹	0	6 ¹
8	0	45	0	0	6 ¹	45	0				
8	3	46	5	0	7	46	8	0	3		
8	6	47	9	0	7 ¹	48	4	0	6 ¹		
8	9	49	2	0	7 ¹	50	0	0	9 ¹		
9	0	50	7	0	7 ¹	51	8	1	0	0	7 ¹
9	3	52	0	0	8	53	4	1	3	0	7 ¹
9	6	53	5	0	8 ¹	55	0	1	6 ¹	0	8
9	9	54	10	0	8 ¹	55	0	0	1 ¹		
10	0	56	3	0	8 ¹	56	8	0	8		
10	3	57	8	0	8 ¹	58	4	0	8		
10	6	59	0	0	9	60	0	0	11 ¹	0	8 ¹
10	9	60	5	0	9 ¹	61	8	1	2	0	9
11	0	61	10	0	9 ¹	63	4	1	5	0	9 ¹
11	3	63	3	0	9 ¹	65	0	1	8	0	9 ¹
11	6	64	8	0	10	66	8	1	11	0	9 ¹
11	9	66	1	0	10	66	8	0	6		
12	0	67	6	0	10 ¹	68	4	0	10		
12	3	68	11	0	10 ¹	70	0	1	1	0	10 ¹
12	6	70	3	0	10 ¹	71	8	1	4 ¹	0	10 ¹
12	9	71	8	0	11	73	4	1	7	0	10 ¹
13	0	73	1	0	11 ¹	75	0	1	10	0	11
13	3	74	6	0	11 ¹	75	0	0	5		
13	6	75	11	0	11 ¹	76	8	0	8		
13	9	77	4	0	11 ¹	78	4	0	11 ¹	0	11 ¹
14	0	78	9	1	0	80	0	1	3	0	11 ¹
14	3	80	2	1	0	81	8	1	6	1	0
14	6	81	6	1	0	82	4	1	0	1	0

From this table it appears, that the prices of the household loaves, as fixed by the statute, are higher than they ought to be in nearly the same proportion with those of the wheaten: for as the average increase of profit to the baker on a sack of wheaten flour baked and sold in quarter peck loaves is, as has been shewn, $1s. 3\frac{1}{4}d.$ so it appears, from the preceding calculation to be $11\frac{1}{4}d.$ on the same quantity of household loaves.

Stat. 8 *Ann.* c. 18. directs, that the weight of the wheaten loaf should always be three-fourths of the weight of the household loaf of the same price: which direction has been copied into Stat. 31 *Geo.* 2. c. 29. and from the divisibility of the pound Avoirdupois, may be observed with the greatest accuracy: but the latter statute having established, for the first time, a price table, adds, that “the prices of the household loaves are always three-fourths of the prices of the wheaten loaves.” Now this is not the case in the price table of the statute, which has not even adhered to this proportion as nearly as might have been done: nor can the proportion be precisely observed in any table whatever. For, supposing the prices of the peck loaf wheaten to be freed from the fraction of a penny, which now occur in about a third of them; and that by this correction the prices of the peck loaf household could be accurately made three-fourths of the former: yet, as these must

abound with fractions, so, when they come to be divided and subdivided for the prices of the half peck and quarter peck loaves, the proportion must frequently be departed from. Instead, therefore, of computing the prices of the household loaves from the wheaten, it seems more expedient to take the respective values of the sacks of flour in the given proportions of 3 to 4, and to calculate the prices of the loaves by the rule before laid down. This has been done in the preceding table, but as the advance on the sack of flour correspondent to that of 3*d.* on the bushel of wheat, is in household bread 1*s.* 4 $\frac{7}{8}$ *d.* to avoid an unusual notation I have, in the table, made that advance alternately 1*s.* 5*d.* and 1*s.* 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.*

Table 3.—Rye Bread.

Price of Bushel & Baking.	Price of Sack of Flour and Baking.	Price of Peck Loaf	Twentydo	Increase of Profit.	Corrected Price.
s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
3 3	23 10	1 12 $\frac{1}{4}$	23 9	0 1*	1 2
3 6	25 8	1 12 $\frac{1}{4}$	25 5	0 3*	1 3
3 9	27 6	1 12 $\frac{1}{4}$	27 6		1 5
4 0	29 4	1 15 $\frac{1}{4}$	29 7	0 3	1 6
4 3	31 2	1 16 $\frac{1}{4}$	31 3	0 1	1 7
4 6	33 0	1 18	33 1	0 4	
4 9	34 10	1 18 $\frac{1}{4}$	31 7	0 3*	1 9
5 0	36 8	1 10	36 8		
5 3	38 6	1 11	38 4	0 2*	
5 6	40 4	2 0	40 0	0 4*	
5 9	42 2	2 1	41 8	0 6*	
6 0	44 0	2 2 $\frac{1}{4}$	44 7	0 7	2 2
6 3	45 10	2 3 $\frac{1}{4}$	46 3	0 5	2 4
6 6	47 8	2 5	48 4	0 8	
6 9	49 6	2 6	50 0	0 6	
7 0	51 4	2 7	51 8	0 4	

In this and the following tables relating to bread made from other grain than wheat, I have been obliged to use in my calculation the price of the peck loaf, it being the only one inserted in the price table of the statute. The fractions of a penny, which so frequently occur in these prices, render it very unfit for use, and gives an undue latitude to the baker in fixing the prices of the smaller loaves. And the advances in the price of the peck loaf being made in so desultory a manner, varying from $\frac{3}{4}d.$ to $1\frac{3}{4}d.$ may render it doubtful whether the proportion I have assumed of the respective prices of the sack of flour and bushel of rye be the same as the framers of the table had in view: if I have erred, and should have taken it at $7\frac{1}{4}$ to 1, instead of $7\frac{1}{3}$ to 1, the increase of profit to the baker at the prices towards the conclusion of the table would be nearly doubled. The examination begins as early as the table is likely to be in use, when the price of the quarter of rye is only 14s. the table itself ends much too soon, and should be extended. It is to be observed, that the prices in this table in the statute book vary from those in BURN in no less than six instances: I have followed the former, because there is a responsibility in the law printers of the crown, which does not attach to the editor of a private work. The copy of the statutes I use is the quarto edition of 1786.

Table 4.—Barley Bread.

Price of Bread & Baking.	Price of Sack of Flour.	Price of Loaf 1 lb.	Price of Loaf 2 lb.	Price of Loaf 3 lb.	Price of Loaf 4 lb.
s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
2 0	13 0	0 11	10 0	0 7	0 11
3 0	15 0	1 0	10 1	0 7	1 0
3 0	21 11	1 1	22 0	0 1	1 1
3 0	23 7	1 2	24 7	0 1	1 2
3 0	25 0	1 3	25 0	0 1	1 3
4 0	27 0	1 4	27 1	0 1	1 4
4 0	28 8	1 5	29 7	0 1	1 5
4 6	30 4	1 7	31 8	1 0	1 6
4 0	32 0	1 8	33 4	1 0	1 7
5 0	33 9	1 9	35 0	1 3	1 8
5 3	35 5	1 10	36 8	1 2	1 9
5 6	37 1	1 11	38 4	1 2	1 10
5 9	38 8	2 0	40 0	1 2	1 11
6 0	40 6	2 1	41 8	1 2	2 0
6 2	42 2 ¹ / ₄	2 2	43 4	1 1	2 1
6 6	43 10 ³ / ₄	2 3	45 0	1 1	2 2
6 9	45 6 ³ / ₄	2 4	46 8	1 1	2 3
7 0	47 3	2 5	48 4	1 1	2 4

The prices of the barley loaf are in part liable to the same objection as those of rye bread. The fractions render it unfit for use. The increase of profit to the baker on the sack of flour baked and sold at the prices here examined, is, on an average, 1s. $\frac{1}{2}d.$ At the corrected prices his stated allowance will be diminished 5 $\frac{1}{2}d.$ in the sack. This is the single instance in which the application of the general rule abridges his fixt profit; and this is occasioned by the advance on the sack of flour exceeding 20d. only one farthing, so that the balance will be 39 times against him, and then 40 times successively in his favor.

Table 5.—Oat Bread.

Price of Bushel and Baking.	Price of Sack of Flour and Baking.	Price of Peck Loaf.	Price of 20 ditto.	Increase of Profit.	Corrected Price.
s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.	s. d.
2 3	33 0	1 7 $\frac{1}{4}$	32 1	*0 11	1 8
2 6	36 8	1 10	36 8		
2 9	40 4	2 1	41 8	1 4	2 0
3 0	44 0	2 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	44 2	0 2	2 2
3 3	47 8	2 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	47 1	*0 7	2 5
3 6	51 4	2 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	50 10	*0 6	2 7
3 9	55 0	2 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	54 7	*0 5	2 9
4 0	58 8	2 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	58 9	0 1	2 11
4 3	62 4	3 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	61 3	*0 11	3 1
4 6	66 0	3 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	64 2	*1 10	3 4
4 9	69 8	3 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	68 9	*1 0	3 6
5 0	73 4	3 8	73 4		
5 3	77 0	3 11	78 4	1 4	3 10
5 6	80 8	4 1	81 8	1 0	4 0
5 9	84 4	4 3	85 0	0 8	
6 0	88 0	4 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	89 2	1 2	4 5
6 3	91 8	4 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	92 1	0 5	4 7
6 6	95 4	4 9	95 0	*0 4	
6 9	99 0	5 0	100 0	1 0	4 11
7 0	102 8	5 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	102 6	*0 2	5 2

The prices of the oat loaves are about double those of the rye loaves; and the respective weights of the affized loaves of these two sorts of bread approach still nearer this proportion. The prices of both are calculated in the same negligent manner, and the advances in price are alike unequal in both: so that the same doubt, on what proportion between the values of the sack of flour and bushel of grain the computation was made, arises in both cases. In support of the proportion assumed in this examination, it may be observed,

that though in the price tables the balance is sometimes against the baker, yet the average of the whole is in his favor; and that in the tables of affixed bread, the weights, both of the rye and oat loaves, are universally lower than what they would be if accurately calculated.

Where the affize of oat bread is set, it should be observed, that as more than double the measure of oats is necessary to make a sack of oat meal, than of wheat to produce a sack of such flour as the Standard Wheaten bread is made of, so the allowance to the baker on the bushel of oats should not exceed one half what he has on the bushel of wheat. For as his expenses in making a sack of either into bread are, I apprehend, nearly the same, so should the allowance on both be alike.

Table 6.—Bean Bread

Price of Bushel & Baking		Price of Sack of Flour and Baking.		Price of Peck Loaf		Price of 20 do.		Increase of Profit.		Corrected Price.	
s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.	s.	d.
3	3	17	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	10 $\frac{1}{4}$	17	11	0	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	11
3	6	19	3	0	11 $\frac{3}{4}$	19	7	0	4	1	0
3	9	20	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	20	10	0	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	0
4	0	22	0	1	1 $\frac{1}{4}$	22	1	0	1	1	1
4	3	23	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	2 $\frac{1}{4}$	23	9	0	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	2
4	6	24	9	1	3	25	0	0	3		
4	9	26	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	3 $\frac{3}{4}$	26	3	0	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	4
5	0	27	6	1	4 $\frac{1}{4}$	27	11	0	5	1	5
5	3	28	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	5 $\frac{1}{4}$	29	7	0	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	5
5	6	30	3	1	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	32	6	2	3	1	6
5	9	31	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	7 $\frac{3}{4}$	32	11	1	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	7
6	0	33	0	1	8	33	4	0	4		
6	3	34	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	34	7	0	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	9
6	6	35	9	1	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	35	10	0	1	1	9
6	9	37	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	37	6	0	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	10
7	0	38	6	1	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	39	2	0	8	1	11

As the allowance on the bushel of wheat would be too great to be granted on the bushel of oats, so would it be too small on the bushel of beans to indemnify the baker's expenses, and yield him a reasonable profit on bread made from this latter grain.

Maflin Bread.

The proportion between the prices of the sack of maflin flour and of the bushel of maflin being that of $6\frac{2}{3}$ to 1, while the latter advances $3d.$ the former is increased $20d.$ An advance of $1d.$ in the price of the peck loaf produces the same sum, so that the 20 peck loaves always sell for exactly the amount of the price of the sack of flour and baker's allowance: and the table no where wants correction.

Standard Wheaten Bread.

The price table for loaves of this bread in Stat. 13 Geo. 3. c. 62. is calculated on the same proportion as that for maflin bread in Stat. 31 Geo. 2. c. 29. and is equally accurate.

CHAP. IV.



*The Weights of Assized Loaves examined
and corrected.*

HAVING gone through the price tables in the statutes, and pointed out their inaccuracies, I shall proceed to examine, in like manner, the tables regulating the weights of the different sorts of assized loaves, and shall confine my enquiry to the weight of the twelve-penny loaf, as the rest may be determined from it. In the table Dr. BURN has given us from Stat. 31 Geo. 2. there are the prices of the penny loaf only: and he says, “as the weight of the penny loaf is here only specified, the weight of larger loaves may be easily ascertained by addition.” An incautious reader may be hence lead to suppose these words to have been copied from the statute (for the paragraph stands between two others that are so copied), and might conclude that the act contains the weight of no loaves of higher prices, whereas it has no less than five different columns for the several prices of 18d. 12d. 6d. 2d. and 1d. loaves. BURN’s Justice is more convenient for general use than the Statute Book; but the weights of the larger loaves, when

ascertained as he directs, will most frequently fall short, by a few drachms, of those in the table; to which the clerks to the magistrates, in drawing out the affize, should always have recourse, both that the act may be strictly complied with, and that they may avoid the errors to which they may be liable in computations hastily made.

The following tables of examination are thus constructed:—

The two first columns are the same as in the preceding tables.

The third column is the weight of the twelve-penny loaf, from the affize table of the statutes.

The fourth column contains the sum received by the baker for a sack of flour baked and sold in affized loaves.

The fifth column states the increase of profit, beyond his fixed allowance, which he has from it.

The sixth column is the weight of the twelve-penny loaf corrected.

And the seventh the increase of weight to the purchaser from such correction.

Table 1.—Wheaten Bread.

Price of Bushel and Baking.	Price of Sack of Flour & Baking.	Weight of Twelve- penny Loaf.	Produce of Sack of Flour.	Increase of Profit.	Corrected Weight.	Increase of Weight from Correction.
s. d.	s. d.	lb. oz. dr.	s. d.	s. d.	lb. oz. dr.	oz. dr.
4 9	35 $7\frac{1}{2}$	9 9 7	36 $2\frac{1}{2}$	0 7	9 12 1	2 10
5 0	37 6	9 1 1	38 $3\frac{1}{2}$	0 $9\frac{1}{2}$	9 4 4	3 3
5 3	39 $4\frac{1}{2}$	8 11 1	39 $11\frac{1}{2}$	0 7	8 13 3	2 2
5 6	41 3	8 5 8	41 $7\frac{1}{2}$	0 $4\frac{1}{2}$	8 6 12	1 4
5 9	43 $1\frac{1}{2}$	7 14 0	44 $1\frac{1}{2}$	1 0	8 0 14	2 14
6 0	45 0	7 9 8	45 9	0 9	7 11 8	2 0
6 3	46 $10\frac{1}{2}$	7 4 4	47 $9\frac{1}{2}$	0 $11\frac{1}{2}$	7 6 9	2 5
6 6	48 9	6 15 4	49 $11\frac{1}{2}$	1 $2\frac{1}{2}$	7 2 0	2 12
6 9	50 $7\frac{1}{2}$	6 11 10	51 $7\frac{1}{2}$	1 0	6 13 13	2 3
7 0	52 6	6 8 4	53 4	0 10	6 9 14	1 10
7 3	54 $4\frac{1}{2}$	6 5 2	54 $11\frac{1}{2}$	0 7	6 6 4	1 2
7 6	56 3	6 2 2	56 $7\frac{1}{2}$	0 $4\frac{1}{2}$	6 2 13	0 11
7 9	58 $1\frac{1}{2}$	5 14 8	58 10	0 $8\frac{1}{2}$	5 15 10	1 2
8 0	60 0	5 11 8	60 9	0 9	5 12 10	1 2
8 3	61 $10\frac{1}{2}$	5 7 13	63 $3\frac{1}{2}$	1 5	5 9 13	2 0
8 6	63 9	5 5 9	64 $11\frac{1}{2}$	1 $2\frac{1}{2}$	5 7 3	1 10
8 9	65 $7\frac{1}{2}$	5 3 7	66 $7\frac{1}{2}$	1 0	5 4 11	1 4
9 0	67 6	5 1 6	68 $3\frac{1}{2}$	0 $9\frac{1}{2}$	5 2 5	0 15
9 3	69 $4\frac{1}{2}$	4 14 14	70 $5\frac{1}{2}$	1 1	5 0 2	1 4
9 6	71 3	4 13 2	72 1	0 10	4 14 0	0 14
9 9	73 $1\frac{1}{2}$	4 11 0	74 $1\frac{1}{2}$	1 0	4 12 0	1 0
10 0	75 0	4 8 9	76 $7\frac{1}{2}$	1 7	4 10 2	1 9
10 3	76 $10\frac{1}{2}$	4 7 0	78 $3\frac{1}{2}$	1 5	4 8 5	1 5
10 6	78 9	4 5 8	80 0	1 3	4 6 9	1 1
10 9	80 $7\frac{1}{2}$	4 4 2	81 7	0 $11\frac{1}{2}$	4 4 15	0 13
11 0	82 6	4 2 12	83 $3\frac{1}{2}$	0 $9\frac{1}{2}$	4 3 6	0 10
11 3	84 $4\frac{1}{2}$	4 0 11	85 8	1 $3\frac{1}{2}$	4 1 14	1 0
11 6	86 3	3 15 12	87 $2\frac{1}{2}$	0 $11\frac{1}{2}$	4 0 7	0 11
11 9	88 $1\frac{1}{2}$	3 13 13	89 11	1 $9\frac{1}{2}$	3 15 1	1 4
12 0	90 0	3 12 14	91 4	1 4	3 13 12	0 14
12 3	91 $10\frac{1}{2}$	3 11 9	93 4	1 $5\frac{1}{2}$	3 12 8	0 15
12 6	93 9	3 10 0	94 11	1 2	3 11 4	0 11
12 9	95 $7\frac{1}{2}$	3 9 8	96 8	1 $0\frac{1}{2}$	3 10 2	0 10
13 0	97 6	3 7 14	99 6	2 0	3 9 0	1 2
13 3	99 $4\frac{1}{2}$	3 6 10	101 $9\frac{1}{2}$	2 5	3 7 15	1 5
13 6	101 3	3 6 0	102 $11\frac{1}{2}$	1 $8\frac{1}{2}$	3 6 14	0 14
13 9	103 $1\frac{1}{2}$	3 4 14	105 $1\frac{1}{2}$	2 0	3 5 14	1 0
14 0	105 0	3 4 2	106 8	1 8	3 4 15	0 13
14 3	106 $10\frac{1}{2}$	3 3 2	108 9	1 $10\frac{1}{2}$	3 4 0	0 14
14 6	108 9	3 2 4	110 $7\frac{1}{2}$	1 $10\frac{1}{2}$	3 3 2	0 14

From the preceding table it appears, that the baker receives, from a sack of flour baked and fold in affized loaves of Wheaten Bread, on an average, the sum of 1s. $1\frac{3}{4}d.$ beyond his stated allowance: and that the correction of the tables would, on an average, increase the weight of the twelve-penny loaf 10z. 5dr.

Table 2.—Household Bread.

Price of Bushel & Baking.		Price of Sack of Flour & Baking.		Weight of Twelve- penny Loaf		Produce of Sack of Flour.		Increase of Profit.		Corrected Weight.		Increase of Weight from Correction.			
s.	d.	s.	d.	lb.	oz.	dr.	s.	d.	s.	d.	lb.	oz.	dr.	oz.	dr.
4	9	26	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	12	12	14	27	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	4	13	0	0	3	2
5	0	28	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	1	12	4	4	28	3 $\frac{3}{4}$	0	12	5	11	1	7
5	3	29	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	11	11	9	6	29	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	5	11	13	2	13
5	5	30	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	10	10	15	10	31	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	8 $\frac{1}{2}$	11	3	11	4
5	9	32	4 $\frac{1}{4}$	10	11	2	32	5 $\frac{1}{4}$	0	1	10	11	13	0	11
6	0	33	9	10	2	12	34	1 $\frac{1}{4}$	0	4	10	4	11	1	15
6	3	35	2	9	12	6	35	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	0	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	9	14	1	1	11
6	6	36	6 $\frac{3}{4}$	9	9	7	11	36	7 $\frac{3}{4}$	0	1	9	8	1	0
6	9	37	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	9	9	1	1	38	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	0	4	9	2	6	1
7	0	39	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	8	11	8	39	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	0	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	8	13	3	2	2
7	3	40	9 $\frac{1}{2}$	8	5	1	41	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	0	10 $\frac{1}{4}$	8	8	4	2	12
7	6	42	2 $\frac{1}{4}$	8	0	5	43	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	1	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	8	3	12	3	5
7	9	43	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	7	12	10	44	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	1	0	7	15	8	2	14
8	0	45	0	7	9	3	45	9	0	9	7	11	8	2	0
8	3	46	5	7	7	1	46	7 $\frac{1}{4}$	0	12 $\frac{3}{4}$	7	7	12	0	9
8	6	47	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	7	3	8	48	3 $\frac{1}{4}$	0	6	7	4	4	1	3
8	9	49	2 $\frac{1}{4}$	6	15	4	49	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	0	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	7	0	15	1	11
9	0	50	7 $\frac{1}{2}$	6	11	6	51	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	1	1 $\frac{1}{4}$	6	13	13	2	7
9	3	52	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	6	9	2	52	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	0	10	6	10	13	1	11
9	6	53	5 $\frac{1}{4}$	6	5	14	54	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	1	11 $\frac{1}{2}$	6	8	0	2	2
9	9	54	10 $\frac{1}{4}$	6	3	12	55	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	0	10 $\frac{1}{4}$	6	5	5	1	9
10	0	56	3	6	1	14	56	9 $\frac{1}{4}$	0	6 $\frac{1}{2}$	6	2	13	0	15
10	3	57	8	5	15	5	58	4	0	8	6	0	6	1	1
10	6	59	0 $\frac{3}{4}$	5	12	11	59	11 $\frac{1}{4}$	0	11	5	14	2	1	7
10	9	60	5 $\frac{1}{4}$	5	10	6	61	6 $\frac{1}{4}$	1	0 $\frac{1}{2}$	5	11	14	1	8
11	0	61	10 $\frac{1}{2}$	5	7	13	63	3	1	5 $\frac{1}{4}$	5	9	13	2	0

Table 2.—Household Bread.

(Continued).

Price of Bushel and Baking.		Price of Sack of Flour & Baking.		Weight of Twelve- penny Loaf.		Produce of Sack of Flour.		Increase of Profit.		Corrected Weight.		Increase of Weight from Correction.	
11	3	63	$3\frac{1}{2}$	5	5	14	64	$8\frac{1}{4}$	1	$5\frac{1}{4}$	5	7	13
11	6	64	$8\frac{1}{4}$	5	4	12	65	$7\frac{1}{4}$	0	11	5	5	15
11	9	66	$1\frac{1}{4}$	5	3	7	66	$7\frac{1}{4}$	0	$6\frac{1}{4}$	5	4	1
12	0	67	6	5	1	6	68	$3\frac{1}{4}$	0	$9\frac{1}{4}$	5	2	5
12	3	68	$1\frac{1}{4}$	4	15	7	69	$11\frac{1}{4}$	1	$0\frac{1}{4}$	5	0	10
12	6	70	$3\frac{3}{4}$	4	13	10	71	$7\frac{1}{2}$	1	$3\frac{1}{4}$	4	15	1
12	9	71	8	4	11	13	73	4	1	$7\frac{1}{4}$	4	13	7
13	0	73	$1\frac{1}{2}$	4	11	0	74	$1\frac{1}{2}$	1	0	4	12	0
13	3	74	$6\frac{1}{2}$	4	10	2	75	0	0	$5\frac{1}{2}$	4	10	9
13	6	75	$11\frac{1}{4}$	4	8	9	76	$7\frac{1}{4}$	0	8	4	9	3
13	9	77	$4\frac{1}{4}$	4	7	0	78	$3\frac{1}{2}$	0	$11\frac{1}{4}$	4	7	14
14	0	78	9	4	5	8	80	0	1	3	4	6	9
14	3	80	$2\frac{1}{4}$	4	4	2	81	$7\frac{1}{4}$	1	$5\frac{1}{4}$	4	5	5
14	6	81	$6\frac{1}{4}$	4	2	12	83	$3\frac{1}{2}$	1	$8\frac{1}{4}$	4	4	2

The average increase of profit to the baker is $9\frac{3}{4}d.$ and the average increase of weight by the correction of the table, would be 10z. 6dr. in the twelve-penny loaf.

Table 3.—Rye Bread.

Price of Butter and Baking.	Price of Sack of Flour & Baking.	Weight of Twelve- penny Loaf.	Produce of Sack of Flour.	Increase of Profit.	Corrected Weight.	Increase of Weight from Correction.
s. d.	s. d.	lb. oz. dr.	s. d.	s. d.	lb. oz. dr.	oz. dr.
3 3	23 10	14 7 0	24 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	14 9 4	2 4
3 6	25 8	13 6 2	25 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 3 $\frac{1}{2}$	13 8 9	2 7
3 9	27 6	12 7 4	27 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	12 10 2	2 14
4 0	29 4	11 11 8	29 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 3 $\frac{1}{2}$	11 13 8	2 0
4 3	31 2	11 1 0	31 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	11 2 6	1 6
4 6	33 0	10 6 14	33 3 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 3 $\frac{1}{2}$	10 8 7	1 9
4 9	34 10	9 13 14	35 4 0	0 6	9 15 9	2 5
5 0	36 8	9 6 0	37 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 7 10	1 10
5 3	38 6	8 14 14	38 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 0 6	1 8
5 6	40 4	8 8 2	40 10 0	0 6	8 9 13	1 11
5 9	42 2	8 2 2	42 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 6 $\frac{1}{2}$	8 3 13	1 11
6 0	44 0	7 12 15	44 6 0	0 6	7 14 5	1 6
6 3	45 10	7 8 0	46 4 0	0 6	7 9 4	1 4
6 6	47 8	7 3 8	48 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	7 4 10	1 2
6 9	49 6	6 15 6	49 11 0	0 5	7 0 5	0 15
7 0	51 4	6 11 1	51 11 0	0 7	6 12 4	1 13

The average increase of profit to the baker on rye bread sold in affixed loaves is $4\frac{3}{4}d.$ per sack; and the average increase of the weight of the twelve-penny loaf, if the table was corrected, would be 10z. 11dr.

Table 4.—Barley Bread.

Price of Bushel and Baking.	Price of Sack of Flour & Baking.	Weight of Twelve- penny Loaf.	Produce of Sack of Flour.	Increase of Profit.	Corrected Weight.	Increase of Weight from Correction.
s. d.	s. d.	lb. oz. dr.	s. d.	s. d.	lb. oz. dr.	oz. dr.
2 9	18 6 $\frac{3}{4}$	18 6 12	18 10 $\frac{1}{4}$	0 3 $\frac{1}{2}$	18 11 8	4 12
3 0	20 3	16 14 0	20 7 0	0 3	17 2 9	4 9
3 3	21 11	15 9 0	22 3 $\frac{3}{4}$	0 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	15 13 7	4 7
3 6	23 7	14 7 0	24 0 $\frac{1}{4}$	0 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	14 11 5	4 5
3 9	25 3 $\frac{1}{4}$	13 8 0	25 8 $\frac{1}{4}$	0 5	13 11 10	3 10
4 0	27 0	12 10 8	27 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	0 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	12 13 14	3 6
4 3	28 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	11 14 14	29 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	12 1 13	3 15
4 6	30 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	11 4 0	30 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 6	11 7 0	3 0
4 9	32 0 $\frac{3}{4}$	10 11 6	32 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	0 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	10 13 6	2 0
5 0	33 9	10 2 0	34 3 $\frac{3}{4}$	0 6 $\frac{3}{4}$	10 4 11	2 11
5 3	35 5 $\frac{1}{4}$	9 10 14	35 10 $\frac{3}{4}$	0 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 12 14	2 0
5 6	37 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 3 6	37 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 7	9 5 12	2 6
5 9	38 9 $\frac{3}{4}$	8 13 0	39 5 0	0 7 $\frac{1}{4}$	8 15 4	2 4
6 0	40 6	8 7 0	41 2 0	0 8	8 9 4	2 4
6 3	42 2 $\frac{1}{4}$	8 1 12	42 10 0	0 7 $\frac{3}{4}$	8 3 12	2 0
6 6	43 10 $\frac{3}{4}$	7 12 8	44 7 $\frac{3}{4}$	0 9 $\frac{1}{4}$	7 14 11	2 3
6 9	45 6 $\frac{3}{4}$	7 8 0	46 4 0	0 9 $\frac{1}{4}$	7 10 0	2 0
7 0	47 3	7 3 8	48 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	7 5 10	2 2

Average increase of profit to the baker $6\frac{1}{4}d.$ per sack; average increase of weight on the twelve-penny loaf, if the table was corrected, 2oz. 15dr.

Table 5.—Oat Bread.

Price of Bushel and Baking.	Price of Sack of Flour & Baking.	Weight of Twelve- penny Loaf.	Produce of Sack of Flour.	Increase of Profit.	Corrected Weight.	Increase of Weight from Correction.
s. d.	s. d.	lb. oz. dr.	s. d.	s. d.	lb. oz. dr.	oz. dr.
2 9	40 4	8 8 1	40 8 1	0 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	8 9 13	1 5
3 0	44 0	7 13 4	44 4 0	0 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	7 14 5	1 1
3 3	47 8	7 3 8	48 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	0 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	7 4 10	1 2
3 6	51 4	6 11 4	51 10 0	0 6 0	6 12 4	1 0
3 9	55 0	6 4 2	55 6 0	0 6 0	6 5 1	0 15
4 0	58 8	5 13 12	59 3 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	0 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 14 12	1 0
4 3	62 4	5 8 8	62 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	0 5 $\frac{1}{2}$	5 9 3	0 11
4 6	66 0	5 3 4	66 9 9	9 9 9	5 4 3	0 15
4 9	69 8	4 15 2	70 3 0	0 7 4	4 15 12	0 10
5 0	73 4	4 11 0	74 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	0 9 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 11 13	0 13
5 3	77 0	4 7 10	77 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	0 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 8 3	0 9
5 6	80 8	4 4 4	81 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	0 9 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 4 14	0 10
5 9	84 4	4 1 4	85 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	0 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	4 1 14	0 10
6 0	88 0	3 14 10	88 9 0	0 9 3	3 15 2	0 8
6 3	91 8	3 12 0	92 8 1	0 3 12	3 12 10	0 10
6 6	95 4	3 9 12	96 3 0	0 11 3	3 10 5	0 9
6 9	99 0	3 7 14	99 6 0	0 6 3	3 8 2	0 4
7 0	102 8	3 5 10	103 8 0	0 1 3	3 6 2	0 8

The baker's average increase of profit is $6\frac{1}{2}d.$ per sack by the table now in force: and the average increase of weight in the twelve-penny loaf, from the correction of the table, would be $11dr.$

Table 6.—*Bean Bread.*

Price of Bushel & Baking.	Price of Sack of Flour & Baking.	Weight of Twelve- penny Loaf	Produce of Sack of Flour.	Increase of Profit.	Corrected Weight.	Increase of Weight from Correction.
s. d.	s. d.	lb. oz. dr.	s. d.	s. d.	lb. oz. dr.	oz. dr.
3 3	17 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	19 5 0	17 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 1	19 7 0	2 0
3 6	19 3	17 15 4	19 4 0	0 1	18 0 13	1 9
3 9	20 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	16 11 12	20 9 0	0 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	16 13 9	1 13
4 0	22 0	15 11 4	22 1 0	0 1	15 12 11	1 7
4 3	23 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	14 12 4	23 6 0	0 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	14 13 13	1 9
4 6	24 9	13 15 2	24 11 0	0 2	14 0 10	1 8
4 9	26 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	13 4 4	26 2 0	0 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	13 4 13	0 9
5 0	27 6	12 9 0	27 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	12 10 2	1 2
5 3	28 10 $\frac{1}{2}$	11 15 4	29 0 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 2	12 0 8	1 4
5 6	30 3	† 11 6 10	30 5 0	0 2	11 7 12	1 2
5 9	31 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	10 14 12	31 9 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 2	10 15 12	1 0
6 0	33 0	10 7 4	33 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	10 8 7	1 3
6 3	34 4 $\frac{1}{2}$	10 0 8	34 7 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 3	10 1 11	1 3
6 6	35 9	9 10 8	35 11 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 11 8	1 0
6 9	37 1 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 4 14 $\frac{1}{2}$	37 4 0	0 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 5 12	0 14
7 0	38 6	8 15 10	38 8 $\frac{1}{2}$	0 2 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 0 6	0 12

† In the quarto edition of the statutes 10lb. 6oz. 10dr. evidently an error of the press: I have before remarked other variations between the tables in this edition and those in BURN, and there are some which I have passed unnoticed. I have assigned my reason for considering the Statute Book as the highest authority; but in the progress of this examination there have appeared grounds to suspect the accuracy of the crown printers. Errors in tables which regulate the price and weight of our daily food must arise from a negligence, both liable to and deserving of punishment.

Average increase of profit to the baker only $1\frac{3}{4}d.$ per sack; and average increase of weight in the twelve penny loaf, from the correction of the table, 10z. 3dr.

Table 7.—Maflin Bread.

Price of Bushel and Baking.	Price of Sack of Flour and Baking.	Weight in Table.	Produce of Sack of Flour	Decrease of Profit.	Corrected Weight.	Decrease in Weight.
s. d.	s. d.	lb. oz. dr.	s. d.	s. d.	lb. oz. dr.	oz. dr.
3 3	21 8	16 2 0	21 6 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	16 0 10	1 6
3 6	23 4	15 0 0	23 2 0	2	14 14 4	1 12
3 9	25 0	13 15 8	24 10 0	2	13 14 6	1 2
4 0	26 8	13 2 0	26 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	13 0 8	1 8
4 3	28 4	12 6 0	28 0 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	12 4 3	1 13
4 6	30 0	11 10 12	29 9 0	3	11 9 5	1 7
4 9	31 8	11 1 0	31 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	10 15 9	1 7
5 0	33 4	10 8 0	33 1 0	3	10 6 12	1 4
5 3	35 0	9 15 12	34 9 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	2 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 14 13	0 15
5 6	36 8	9 8 4	36 6 0	2	9 7 10	0 10
5 9	38 4	9 1 8	38 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	1 $\frac{1}{2}$	9 1 0	0 8
6 0	40 0	8 11 14	39 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	8 11 0	0 14
6 3	41 8	8 6 4	41 4 0	3 $\frac{1}{2}$	8 5 7	0 13
6 6	43 4	8 1 0	43 1 0	3	8 0 4	0 12
6 9	45 0	7 12 8	44 7 $\frac{1}{2}$ 0	4 $\frac{1}{2}$	7 11 8	1 0
7 0	46 8	7 8 0	46 4 0	4	7 7 2	0 14

The weight of the maflin loaf is calculated with more accuracy than the other parts of the affize table, but on a proportion between the respective weights of flour and bread different from that established by the statute: which, fixing the weight of the peck loaf at 17lb 6oz. limits the weight of the bread made from the sack to 347 $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. But the calculator of the affize table has, in this

single instance, computed it at 350*lb.* This excess diminishes the allowance of the baker, on an average, $2\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* in the sack: and if the calculation be made (as in column 6 of the preceding table) at the proportion established in the statute, the weight of the twelve-penny loaf would be lessened, on an average, 1*oz.* 2*dr.*

Standard Wheaten Bread.

The table generally makes the weight of the twelve-penny loaf heavier by 1*dr.* than my calculation, always allowing that drachm for the remaining fraction, which I have neglected.

Having brought this examination to a conclusion, if the author should be asked to what purpose he has bestowed so much time, or what fruit he can possibly expect from his labours, since if all the corrections which he has suggested were adopted, they could diminish the price of the quarter peck loaf but one farthing, or add but one ounce to the weight of the twelve-penny loaf: he replies, that if he could be the humble means of saving in seasons of scarcity one farthing in the pocket of the labourer, or of adding a single ounce of bread to his scanty meal, he would think both his time well bestowed, and his labours amply repaid. But he acknowledges a further view: he has the presumption to hope, that this minute detail

of the inaccuracies of the present tables may suggest the necessity of greater care and circumspection in forming new ones. Those now in force have been strongly objected to by a respectable writer* already noticed, who contends that their very principles are erroneous, that more bread is made from a sack of flour, and more flour produced from a bushel of wheat, than the tables admit: the first objection regards the baker, the second the mealman: both shall be considered in order.

* Rev. LUKE HESLOP, Archdeacon of Bucks, in his *Observations on Stat. 31 Geo. 2. c. 29.*

CHAP. V.

*Of the Baker's Allowance.*

IT is remarked by the Honourable DAINES BARRINGTON, in his Observations on the more ancient statutes, “that those who supply the
 “people with their necessary food or drink (as
 “bakers, millers, and brewers) have not only
 “always been suspected, more than other traders,
 “of impositions, but have likewise been subject
 “to regulations of particular severity.” And the worthy and sensible writer, whose objections come now under consideration, frequently expresses himself so incautiously as to strengthen popular prejudice: and the whole of his treatise tends to bring into disgrace two bodies of men, both of them useful and necessary to the public, and of representing the pressure, so universally felt in seasons like the present, as arising, in no small degree, from their exorbitant gains. If their gains be indeed so exorbitantly great as he represents them, it will well suit the wisdom of the legislature to abridge them. But the evidence ought to be coolly and impartially weighed before they are condemned, and the

practicability and expediency of new regulations should be very maturely considered before their establishment is attempted.

Mr. HESLOP tells us, that he has calculated the profits of the baker "on a supposition that his allowance is 1s. 6d." that "this being the allowance supposed in the table, it may be presumed that less would not be given him," that he believes "less has never been given," and that it is the opinion of many, "that 1s. 6d. is the allowance fixed by the statute." It is to be wished the worthy gentleman had recollected the observation of Lord COKE, quoted by Dr. BURN, "Abridgements are of good and necessary use to serve as tables, but not to ground any opinion:" for if, instead of relying on the abstract of the act in BURN, he had turned to the Statute Book, he would there have found the use of the table of assize explained by two examples, in one of which the allowance to the baker is 1s. 6d. and in the other only 1s. So that the statute did not *fix* the allowance, nor in fact has it been every where the same, it remaining in some districts, till very lately, under 1s. 6d.

In the preceding tables, whatever accrued to the baker beyond the allowance fixed by the magistrates, is called an Increase of Profit, because it may be presumed, the legislature meant the allowance to

be so fixed as not only to repay his charges, but also to yield a suitable reward to his labour and industry. But the word *profit* cannot be applied with propriety, as Mr. HESLOP has applied it, to the whole of his allowance. He calculates his whole profit on four peck loaves, meaning both his allowance and the surplus arising from the laxity with which the table of assize is constructed to be 2s. 6d. a fum, he observes, equal to the price of half a bushel of wheat, when it is 5s. per bushel; this he deems not only "to have been unnecessary for the maintenance of the baker, but also injurious to the public and distressing to the poor; until the statute, with the concurrence of the bakers themselves, became a dead letter." The comparison of the baker's allowance and contingent profits, with the price of any quantity of corn, is wholly irrelevant. If we would know whether that allowance and other profits are too great or not, the question must be determined by an accurate appreciation of his necessary charges and expenses. If the excess of his allowance together with his other profits above these charges and expenses, appear too great, they ought, and the magistrates are empowered by the statute to curtail them. Mr. HESLOP tells us, that in London, from 1792, the statute has been laid aside by the mutual consent of the magistrates and bakers: I am unacquainted with the peculiar privileges of the city of London, whose rights are preserved by the

statute, and I do not doubt they were perfectly regular in thus abrogating within their jurisdiction the assize established by act of parliament, and substituting in its room a bye-law of their own; of the advantage resulting from this change to the public we are not made acquainted; the author, not having told us what, or whether any alteration was made in the assize table: as to the diminution of the baker's allowance, it might have been done by the magistrates without rendering the statute a dead letter. This allowance and contingent advantages Mr. HESLOP appreciates at 12s. 6d. on the sack of flour; the magistrates in 1792, reduced it to 10s. and by the act passed in 1797, it was again advanced to 11s. 8d. How far the baker's contingent profits were affected by the regulations in 1792 I cannot tell: but the table in the act passed in 1797 has cut them off in the priced loaves, and probably also in the assized loaves: my readers will excuse me that I stop not to make a minute calculation, because I think the London table, however accurate in this respect, by no ways fitted for general adoption. The reduction, therefore, made by the London table on the baker's allowance is only from 12s. 6d. to 11s. 8d. and Mr. HESLOP himself conceives the former allowance of 10s. to be inadequate to the just expectations of the baker: for after mentioning another latent source of profit, which shall presently be considered, he adds, " but this is not

“ mentioned to prejudice the bakers: for every
 “ person, by industry and care in their several
 “ professions and occupations, should procure, not
 “ only present subsistence, but a suitable provision
 “ for themselves and families. And in London
 “ the baker's profits, under the regulations of this
 “ city table, are not sufficient, I apprehend, for the
 “ purpose.” I confess myself, on a comparison
 of the passages here cited, unable to distinguish at
 what precise point between 10s. and 12s. 6d. per
 sack, the allowance would, in Mr. HESLOP's
 opinion, become sufficient, and yet neither in-
 jurious to the public nor oppressive to the poor.

But before we proceed further to scrutinize
 this allowance, let us previously enquire into
 the changes which, in successive ages, it has
 undergone. The first statute on this subject we
 have on record, is that of 51 Hen. 3. which, how-
 ever numerous its mistakes in the proportion
 between the weight of bread and the price to be
 paid for it, has the peculiar merit of being very
 explicit in declaring its intentions. “ *And it is to*
 “ *be known, that a baker, in every quarter of wheat,*
 “ *(as is proved by the King's baker) may gain 4d.*
 “ *and the bran and two loaves for advantage, for*
 “ *three servants $1\frac{1}{2}d.$ for two lads $\frac{1}{2}d.$ for salt $\frac{1}{2}d.$*
 “ *for kneading $\frac{1}{2}d.$ for candle $\frac{1}{4}d.$ for wood 2d. for*
 “ *his boultel $1\frac{1}{2}d.$* In toto, adds WYNGATE in his
 “ Abridgement, $12\frac{3}{4}d.$ which, being trebled, ac-

“ according to the rate of money now, amounts
 “ to 3*s.* 2 $\frac{1}{4}$ *d.* and may, therefore, be now conceived
 “ fit for a baker to gain in the uttering of every
 “ quarter of wheat. Howbeit note, that by the
 “ book of assize now in use, published by pro-
 “ clamation towards the latter end of the reign of
 “ Queen Elizabeth, bakers inhabiting corporate
 “ towns (in regard that they pay scot and lot there)
 “ are allowed 6*s.* in every quarter of the middle
 “ prized wheat for their charge in baking, and
 “ country or foreign bakers only 4*s.*” Between
 the reign of *Q. Eliz.* and that of *Q. Ann.*, this
 allowance increased, if we may credit the assertion
 of the bakers themselves, from 6*s.* on the quarter
 of wheat, to 10*s.* on the sack of flour, and it is
 not, I believe, at present, any where higher than
 11*s.* 3*d.* (or 1*s.* 6*d.* per bushel) except in London,
 where it is 11*s.* 8*d.* Two questions, therefore,
 arise, first, whether the increase of allowance has
 been in proportion to the decrease in the value of
 money: and, secondly, if it has not, whether it is
 nevertheless, adequate to what the trade may justly
 expect as an indemnification of their charges, and
 a due reward of their labours. The first question
 must, I believe, be determined in the negative;
 and it must be granted, that 11*s.* 3*d.* now is
 not equivalent in value to 6*s.* in the time of
Q. Eliz. nor even to 12 $\frac{3}{4}$ *d.* at the early period in
 which the first table of assize was made. Nor
 could it be expected that it should be so: for I

apprehend the greater the value of money, and the higher the rate of interest, the greater will be the profits of every trade: and that neither the profits of the trader, nor the wages of the artisan or labourer, bear now the same proportion to the value of money as they did formerly. The baker, therefore, in this respect, is on the same footing with the rest of community: and the propriety of increasing his present allowance must depend on the resolution of the second question, without any reference to the practice or custom of past ages. In determining this point the early statute of *Hen. 3.* has given an example worthy of imitation, it not only fixes the baker's allowance in the gross, but it enters into a minute detail of the purposes for which that allowance is given. And if the legislature should think fit to continue the discretionary power now vested in the magistrate, the bakers should not expect that their vague complaints of the insufficiency of what is now allowed them, can or ought to be attended to, but they should accompany their complaints with a fair and open statement of what are their necessary expenses. And if any alteration be made in the present laws, every latent source of profit should be removed, and the bakers should be rigidly confined to their allowance, whether permanently fixed by the legislature, or left, as at present, to the discretion of the magistrates.

In the two preceding chapters it has been shewn, what increase of profit the baker derives from the tables of affize now in force, supposing the principles on which those tables are calculated to be true. The statute of 31 *Geo.* 2. says, that from every sack of flour there ought to be produced, on an average, 20 peck loaves, weighing, when well baken, each 17*lb.* 6oz. But Mr. HESLOP has shewn, from repeated experiments, that the sack of flour will produce nearly 22 such loaves. The baker has therefore here a latent source of profit not generally known, but, I apprehend, it was intended he should have it: and in fact the trade could not be carried on without some allowance of this nature, though I think the present a very injudicious one, and highly requiring to be otherwise regulated. It has been the custom, from time immemorial, for the baker to allow to his wholesale customers *thirteen loaves to the dozen*. When the statute, therefore, fixt the produce of the sack of flour at 20 peck loaves, the calculation was so made as to give the baker the same advantage as he does to his wholesale customer: for as 12 is to 13, so is 20, the number of loaves fixt by the statute, to $21\frac{2}{3}$, which is nearly the real produce of the sack of flour. In the country especially, a considerable part of the bread baked is not sold at the shop of the baker, but by retailers: and this thirteenth loaf, or what is now more general, and somewhat exceeds it, a penny in the shilling,

is the profit of the retailer. That the retailer, or the baker himself when he sells by retail, should have some profit for his constant attendance on his shop, appears reasonable: but that this profit should vary with the price of corn, and when that is as high as it is at present should nearly equal the whole of the baker's first allowance is unreasonable and burdensome to the public. The bakers, without considering they receive it themselves, now grudge it to their retailers, and have reduced it one half. It appears to me, that it ought to be wholly taken away, and the baker compensated by an increase of his first allowance. In the similar trade of the mealman the allowance to the retailer always continues the same, however the price of flour may vary, and is in some places 2s. 6d. in others 3s. 4d. per sack. What is an adequate recompense for selling a sack of flour by retail must also be a sufficient profit on the sale of the same quantity of flour when baked into bread. It seems, therefore, expedient to increase the weight of the bread to be made from the sack of flour from $347\frac{1}{2}$ lb. as it stands at present, to 376 lb.* the peck loaf would then weigh 18 lb. 12 oz. the half peck loaf 9 lb. 6 oz. and the quarter peck loaf 4 lb. 11 oz. An addition of 3s. 4d. on the sack of flour would be a fair compensation to the baker, and would enable him

* The exact weight of $21\frac{2}{3}$ Peck Loaves is 376 lb. 7 oz. 5 dr.

to make the same allowance to the retailer as the mealman. The effect of this regulation would be, that the peck loaf would sell *2d.* dearer than it does at present, and the purchaser would have *1lb. 6oz.* of bread for this additional *2d.* When wheat is at *5s.* per bushel, he would neither gain nor lose by the alteration in the purchase of the wheaten loaf, nor in that of the standard wheaten when the bushel is at *5s. 9d.* but as it advanced beyond those prices he would be benefited by it: and when the assize is, as at present, at *13s. 6d.* for the bushel and baking, and consequently the pound of bread sells at somewhat more than $3\frac{1}{2}d.$ he would be a gainer *3d.* in the wheaten peck loaf, or $\frac{3}{4}d.$ on the quarter peck loaf, which would be a very seasonable relief in times of scarcity: and he would have a proportionate increase in the weight of the assized loaves.

To this regulation it will probably be objected, on the part of the bakers, that though the weight of the sack of flour, when baked, may, on an average, be *376lb.* yet that in bad seasons it will fall far short of it, and scarcely equal $347\frac{1}{2}lb.$ at which the statute now fixes it: and that, therefore, it would be very unjust to subject the trade to a contingent loss so much the heavier, as it would happen when the price of corn was the highest. To which it may be replied, that all tables must

be formed from general averages, which suppose that the produce will sometimes exceed and sometimes fall short of what it is stated at: that if they were so calculated as to exclude the possibility of a diminution of profit, they would, in general seasons, make those profits exorbitant, and lay an unreasonable burden on the public: that if at any time, the quantity of bread made from a sack of flour should so far fall short of the standard proposed as to subject the baker to a loss, which he has no prospect of seeing compensated in a more favorable season, and which it would be unreasonable to expect he should submit to; while the magistrates are permitted to retain the discretionary powers they now have, a temporary remedy may be applied to this temporary evil, by increasing the allowance for baking during its continuance.

But while I am endeavouring to vindicate the trade from the suspicion of making great and exorbitant profits, and have thus minutely enquired into their contingent gains that the magistrates may adequately judge what allowance to fix, they are themselves loud in their complaints of grievances sustained, and hardships endured, through the ABUSE of the discretionary powers now vested in the magistrates; they have established a CORRESPONDENCE among the trade nearly from one end

of the kingdom to the other: they have drawn up a Bill to emancipate themselves from the oppression they have so long suffered, and have appointed DELEGATES to solicit its passage through the two houses of parliament. An examination into the merits of this Bill, and the expediency of the regulations it is intended to establish, will be the subject of the following chapter.

CHAP. VI.

Remarks on the Country Bakers Bill.

THOUGH it will be readily admitted, that any body of men, who find themselves aggrieved, either by the tenor of the existing laws, or by the manner in which they are carried into execution, have a constitutional right both to apply to the legislature for redress, and previously to consult together what mode of redress they should pray for; yet the persevering industry and great expense with which the bakers have circulated their plans in every town, and that, it should seem, with various success, has, I apprehend, had a tendency to excite, in many places, a sense of grievances which were not before felt, and to draw forth a complaint of hardships which they were not before sensible of suffering. The Bill now in circulation is not that which was originally prepared; in May last they declared their opinion, “ that the application to parliament would be more likely
 “ to succeed if they abandoned the large scale on
 “ which they originally meant to proceed, and to
 “ get a new bill drawn, comprehending therein a

“few of the most prominent grievances under which the trade laboured*.” I have never seen the first Bill, which, I am told, was very voluminous; that which is now in circulation is declared to contain *only a few of their most prominent greivances*, though in their own Observations on this Bill, they are made to say, “if the foregoing matters complained of were regulated and passed into a law, the country bakers conceive *their several grievances will be at an end.*”

Leaving to the trade the task of reconciling these seemingly opposite declarations, I proceed to consider the motives on which the plan originated, and the ends it is designed to serve: and that I may not undesignedly mistake either the one or the other, I shall state both in their own words, and here insert the Observations which they have circulated with the Bill.

* From a printed circular Letter, dated Swaffham 10th December, 1799, and signed WILLIAM STUCKEY.

*“ Observations on the Country Bakers Bill,
 “ intended to be presented to Parliament.”*



“ The Country Bakers complain that they have
 “ long laboured under great and manifest hard-
 “ ships, under many of the clauses and provisions
 “ in the Act of 31st Geo. II. and from the want
 “ of a regular and impartial assize, so that they are
 “ under the necessity of applying to the Legis-
 “ lature for redress. To prevent misrepresentations,
 “ and to obviate the effects of any ill founded
 “ objections that may be made, they humbly
 “ submit the following, as the most prominent
 “ features of their grievances, under which they
 “ now more immediately labour.

“ FIRST.—With respect to the Assize of Bread.
 “ The Act of the 31st Geo. II. directs the Assize
 “ and Weight of Bread to be set, *when* and as
 “ often as the Magistrates shall *think proper*, and to
 “ set such Assize from the Price which Grain,
 “ Meal, or Flour shall bear in the Public Market
 “ in or near the Place or Places for which any
 “ such Assize shall be so set, making reasonable
 “ Allowance to the Bakers, for their Charges,

“ Labour, Pains, Livelihood, and Profit, as the
 “ Magistrates may deem proper. Now as the
 “ above Clause is only discretionary in the Magis-
 “ trates, to set an Affize or not, and to make an
 “ Allowance to the Bakers as they shall think
 “ proper; the Country Bakers heavily complain
 “ of the abuse of such discretionary power: and
 “ with submission alledge, that they conceive it
 “ would be more just and satisfactory to the
 “ Magistrates, and all Parties concerned, to have
 “ an Act for the more certain making an Affize,
 “ and regulating the *manner* of making thereof,
 “ and for that purpose to have Two Affize Tables,
 “ the one for Wheat, and the other for Flour, with
 “ the Prices fixed for the different variations in
 “ the Market, in the same manner (though not
 “ in the same proportions) as the London Tables:
 “ the Magistrates setting such Affize from which
 “ ever Table they shall choose: And as great
 “ hardships have been experienced by the Trade,
 “ in the *manner and mode* of setting the Affize, in
 “ several instances, the Bakers wish to have a
 “ Clause in the Act, directing the *average* to be
 “ taken from the *aggregate* quantity of Wheat or
 “ Flour sold;—they also want the Legislature
 “ to give to the Country Bakers one sure, certain,
 “ and fixed Allowance for their Charges, Labour,
 “ Pains, Livelihood, and Profit, with the Addi-
 “ tional Duty on Salt, and not to leave it dis-
 “ cretionary, as before stated;—for notwithstanding

“ the double Expence of almost every Article
 “ in life, and near Six times as much in Parlia-
 “ mentary and Parochial Taxes, since the Reign
 “ of Queen Ann (at which time Ten Shillings
 “ per sack of flour was deemed a fair compen-
 “ sation to the Baker) yet the Country Bakers
 “ are now prepared to shew that, for several years
 “ past, the said Ten Shillings per Sack has not
 “ been allowed them, but in many instances con-
 “ siderably less—from 10s. down to 8s. and under.

“ SECONDLY.—With respect to the two clauses
 “ in the Act of 31st Geo. II. respecting the
 “ weighing and marking of Bread, the Country
 “ Bakers conceive the penalties rather too severe,
 “ and hope the same may be modified, similar to
 “ the London Bakers Act.

“ THIRDLY.—The Country Bakers wish to
 “ be put upon the same footing as the London
 “ Bakers respecting baking on the Lord's day.

“ If the foregoing matters complained of are
 “ regulated and passed into a law, the Country
 “ Bakers conceive their several Greivances will
 “ be at an end, the Magistrates will be assisted, and
 “ more certain in the manner and mode of setting
 “ the Assize, and the community at large greatly
 “ benefited by it.

" The Committee of Bakers.

- " ROBERT KIDAL and HAMMOND
 " HOI LIDGE, for Norfolk.
 " JOHN SNOOK and JAMES PAUL, for
 " Hampshire.
 " JOSEPH BRYANT, for Bedfordshire.
 " JOHN BAKER, for Huntingdonshire.
 " WILLIAM FIGG, for Suffex.
 " WILLIAM SERVANT, for the West Riding
 " of Yorkshire.
 " WM. PARK, for the Town of Scarborough,
 " Yorkshire.
 " JAMES PHILP, for Berkshire.
 " DANIEL RABAN, for Bucks.
 " J. B. WILDBORE, for Cambridgeshire.
 " JACOB SMITH, for the City of Norwich.
 " JOHN HILYARD, for the Town of Lynn,
 " Norfolk.
 " HENRY EDWARDS, and ROBERT GUY,
 " for Effex.
 " JOSEPH VERLANDER, of Colchester.
 " WM. MURCH, and WM. DINGLE, for the
 " County of Devon."



Having thus left the Bakers to open their own caule, and seen *the few prominent gievances* to which they now think fit to restrain their complaints; I shall next weigh the expediency and

practicability of the regulations proposed to be established by the Bill.

By section 4 it is enacted, that when the magistrates shall require the prices of grain, meal, and flour to be certified, they shall also cause the respective quantities to be also certified: for which purpose they are invested with the same powers in respect to procuring returns of quantities, as they have already under Stat. 31 *Geo.* 2. in regard to procuring returns of prices.

This regulation is a wise one, if it be practicable, which I doubt its being in all places. Where there is an Inspector of the Market, the magistrates, being authorized to see his returns, may obtain a complete knowledge both of the quantities and prices: but where there is no Inspector, I apprehend the powers granted by 31 *Geo.* 2. c. 29. § 17, 18, 19, will be found on trial inadequate to the purpose: and that to carry this regulation effectually into execution, it would be necessary to oblige every dealer, in places where there is no Inspector, to make a return to the Clerk of the Market similar to that made to the Inspectors. As the law now stands, though the buyer or seller is subject to a penalty if he refuses to disclose the true real prices at which he has bought or sold; yet as he is not obliged to do this till required, the clerk of the market must be very alert indeed if he can

find an opportunity of severally putting the question to all the buyers and sellers, and minuting their answers, between the time of their having completed their bargains and their quitting the market. And as to flour, no return can be procured, because in most country markets no flour is sold.

The next section, which directs the affize to be set from the aggregate price, quantity, and amount of the respective sorts and kinds of grain, meal, and flour so certified, *and not otherwise*, is unobjectionable in regard to the public, but would in some districts, from local circumstances, be highly oppressive to the baker, if literally carried into execution*.

The intention of section 6 is permanently to fix the bakers allowance, and to take away the discretionary powers now intrusted to the magistrates. It has been seen in their own Observations on the Bill, that the bakers openly accuse the magistrates of having ABUSED this power, and that from this

* In the district wherein I am now writing, from the inferior quality of the corn there grown, and from the want of mills to convert the same into Flour, and from the habit the bakers are in of seeking supplies from a distance, the Magistrates have lately been under the painful necessity of fixing the affize three shillings in the bushel of wheat beyond what the average price of the market would justify.

abuse have proceeded the numerous hardships and grievances under which they represent themselves as labouring. The charge is a heavy one, and ought to be supported by full and sufficient proofs, and to the discussion of those proofs when produced, I refer for the decision on the justice of the charge. If the legislature should admit it to be well founded, they may, perhaps, also accede to the petition of the bakers, and permanently fix their allowance: and probably it will be by evidence brought from the vicinity of the metropolis, that the *quantum* of this allowance will be determined. But I apprehend that such a general regulation would be injurious to the interest of the public, and that the same allowance which would be no more than reasonable for the baker in Essex, Hertfordshire, Middlesex, and Surrey, would be extravagantly high in Cornwall or Wales, Westmoreland or Cumberland. Whilst the prices of fuel, labour, and house rent differ, as they do at present in the various parts of the kingdom, it should be a very strong necessity that should induce the legislature to fix one and the same allowance throughout the whole.

Section 7 establishes new tables of assize, which, we are told in a written note, "cannot be prepared until the Bill goes before a Committee of the House of Commons, as they must depend on the allowance the House may be disposed

“to grant.” I conjecture from this note, that the bakers expect to be entrusted with the calculation of these tables, and in my opinion the trust would be misplaced. The laws of this kingdom have always, with great wisdom, withheld trust where there is the most distant chance of its being abused through the interest the parties entrusted may have in the subject. Thus a judge of assize may not sit in the county where he was born; a sheriff is not permitted to return a jury when he is related to either parties at suit; the magistrate cannot join in licensing an alehouse if he be a common brewer, distiller, or master; nor execute the acts relating to the assize of bread, if he follows or is concerned in the business of a miller, mealman, or baker. After these examples, it will not, I hope, be thought invidious to affirm, that a committee of bakers are not the fittest persons to be employed in framing a table of assize.

We learn, from the observations before inserted, that the proportions in the intended tables are to be different from the London tables. and as the merit or demerit of such tables depend as well on the justness of the proportions assumed for their basis, as on the accuracy of calculation, it would have been candid in the trade to have openly declared the proportions they wish to have established. Too little attention seems hitherto to have been paid to the subject: and I much doubt that former

parliaments have trusted too implicitly to others, both as to the proportions on which the tables are formed, and the accuracy with which they are calculated. The calculation must always be a matter of trust; we cannot expect a Committee of the House to sit day after day examining the figures of a table: but it may be hoped, that caution and circumspection will be used in the choice of the persons to whom the trust is committed. The negligence and partiality with which the tables in Stat. 31 *Geo.* 2. c. 29. are drawn, show the necessity of this caution and circumspection. But though the calculation must, of course, be committed to others, the legislature should itself fix the proportions on which it is to proceed, and explicitly declare its intentions. This was done for the first time in Stat. 13 *Geo.* 3. c. 62. where the respective weights of the bushel of corn and the flour to be produced from it are exactly defined. The want of such definitions in former acts leaves us ignorant of the grounds on which the alterations in the assize have been made: and we can only conjecture why the weights of the assized loaves in the tables of 31 *Geo.* 2. are *one eighth less* than those in the preceding tables of 8 *Ann.* c. 18.

Section 8 of the bill empowers any two bakers, in places where no assize is set, to require the same to be done; and the magistrates shall,

within days after such a requisition being made to them, set an assize. I did not expect to find the want of an assize among *the more prominent grievances* of the bakers: where no power is exercised, power cannot be abused; and where the seller is the uncontroled arbiter both of price and weight, there can exist no hardship but of his own imposing. Without investigating the end they may have in view, I would remind the bakers that though there are penalties against those who sell at higher prices, or in lesser weight than is fixed by the assize, there has as yet been no punishment enacted against such as may choose to supply the poor with bread at a cheaper rate. And I can tell them, that while *they* are at a considerable expense in circulating complaint and murmur through every market town in the kingdom, there still exist, in the country, some of their humbler brethren, who live happy and contented with more moderate gains than what they might receive under the sanction of the law, if an assize was set.

The next grievance of the bakers is the severity of the penalties for deficiency in weight, or for not duly marking their bread, which they hope will "be modified similar to the London bakers act." Convictions for either of these offences are, I believe, rare; and it may safely be asserted, that delinquency is much more frequent than punishment. If the bakers, however, are not content with the

power of mitigation now vested in the magistrates, and fear *the abuse of this power also*, no great objection lies against the modification of the penalties, provided difficulties be not placed in the way of the prosecutor to prevent conviction. Such difficulties would, I apprehend, be raised by the subsequent clauses of the bill. The 9th Section declares bakers not liable to punishment for deficiency in weight, unless the weight be ascertained within hours after it is baked. The Stat. 31 Geo. 2. allows, in the country, three days from the time when it shall have been exposed to sale. If the time is to be limited to *hours*, and those to be computed from the time of baking, I know not how the prosecutor can either know how long the bread has been baked, nor, in the country, lay his information within the short space limited him. The baker, if the number of hours is to be 24, may keep it back till they be expired before he sends it to his distant retail shops, and may then sell it with impunity, however deficient in weight. The effect of this clause would be to screen the offenders: and I do not believe that bakers and sellers of bread are, as the bill insinuates, “prosecuted and punished more severely than in justice and equity they ought to be,” under the laws now existing.

The third object of the bill, which is to put the country bakers upon the same footing with the

London bakers respecting baking on the Lord's day, is highly praise-worthy.

I shall conclude these Observations with remarking, that though the bill has a clause saving the rights of the city of London, the similar reservation of the rights of the two Universities, and of the Liberty of Westminster, usually inserted in all acts relating to the assize of bread, is here omitted.

CHAP. VII.

Of the Mealman's Profit.

THE affize of bread is fixed by two proportions, supposed to exist between the weight of bread and the weight of the flour whereof it is made, and between the respective prices of flour and corn. The consideration of the latter proportion may appear to some unnecessary, who may ask, why cannot the affize be as easily fixt immediately from the price of flour, as by the circuitous method of computing it from the price of corn. But this is what could not be heretofore done, and though now become practicable, its expediency may be much doubted. As long as the trades of baker and mealman continued united, which they generally were till the beginning of this century, the price of corn was the only standard that could be used, because, from its first purchase in the market till it was sold in bread, it went through the hands of but one person, who both made the flour and baked it. The province of the miller was then confined to grinding, and his reward a toll taken in kind. While the same person

was thus both baker and mealman, the profits of each branch centered in him, and the public had no interest in enquiring what proportion of his gains accrued from the one or the other. But when a separation took place, and the bakers in general relinquished the manufactory of flour to the millers, who, by the assistance of a superior machinery, could do it more perfectly and at a cheaper rate; the mealman, though not included by name, was virtually bound by the assize: for as the baker was still obliged to observe the prices and weights which continued to be fixed by the price of corn, the mealman was under the necessity of making such sorts of flour, and selling them at such prices as would enable the baker to comply with the regulations of the assize. And this was, probably, for some time strictly observed: the boulting engines of the bakers would not all be laid aside at one instance; and it was not till they were in general knocked in pieces, or mouldered into dust, that the bakers were brought entirely into subjection to the mealmen, both as to the quality and price of flour, and the latter completed their triumph by prevailing on the legislature to empower the magistrate to regulate the assize as well by the price of flour as by the price of corn. This was first done by Stat. 8 Ann, c. 18. which directs the magistrates, in setting the assize, to have respect to the price the grain, *meal or flour* whereof the bread is made, shall bear in market.

This direction must, I apprehend, have appeared rather enigmatical to the magistrates of those times, because there was no fixed standard between the respective weights of flour and bread. This deficiency was supplied in Stat. 31 *Geo.* 2. c. 29. which, by defining the weight of the loaf made from a peck, (or 14*lb.* of flour) has enabled the magistrates at all times to know "if the baker hath more or less than the allowance they intend to give him." This substitution of the price of flour instead of the price of corn has been further countenanced by what is called the London Bakers Act, where the table contains two collateral columns, shewing the correspondent prices of wheat and flour: and the table in the bill intended to be brought into parliament by the country bakers is, we are told, to be constructed in the same form, though on different proportions. Thus have the mealmen nearly emancipated themselves from all controul of the law, and the option apparently left to the magistrate to set the assize either by the price of corn or flour, is, in practice, of little use. Whenever the mealmen raise the price of flour beyond its due proportion, the bakers will tell the magistrates, that if the assize be not set according to this enhanced price, they neither *can* nor *will* continue their trade. This sturdy language has, I believe, lately been used in more than one district; and all laws now existing, or that may be made to regulate the assize of bread, will,

in a great measure, fail of their end till the mealman as well as the baker is subjected to them. While the baker was also the mealman, his profits in both capacities were strictly limited: and no reason can be assigned, now that the trades are separated, why the more principal branch should remain without any legal restraint. The effects of this emancipation are severely felt by community, not only in the enhanced price of bread, whenever the mealman advances his flour beyond the proportion of the tables, but also in the exorbitant profit which the retailers make by the sale of flour. While no restraint is laid on the mealman, the retailer is equally uncontrouled. In some parts the latter is merely the agent of the former, for whom he sells, and receives a fixt allowance of 2s. 6d. or at most 3s. 4d. per sack for his trouble: whilst in other districts the retailer is left at liberty to make what profit he pleases, and this has lately been carried as high as 4d. and 6d. in the stone, or 6s. 8d. and 10s. on the sack. The diet of the labourer is chiefly farinaceous, and flour is the principle ingredient in many articles of his food besides bread: the same wise policy which fixes the price of his bread should also ascertain the rate at which he may purchase flour, and free him from the extortion to which he is now liable.

If the legislature should think proper to subject the mealman as well as the baker to an assize, it will be a consideration of great importance, whe-

ther the proportions established in the present tables should be preserved, or whether there is just cause, as Mr. Archdeacon HESLOP suggests, to reduce them, and by the reduction to render both bread and flour at all times cheaper to the purchasers. It is a question upon which I do not think myself competent to give a decisive opinion. I shall, therefore, only enquire into the variations which have taken place in these proportions, assign my reasons for doubting the justness of Mr. HESLOP's conclusions, and suggest the regulations which appear necessary to render any law on the subject effectual.

Passing over the Assize Table in Stat. 51 Hen. 3. because the names of the several sorts of bread, and the denominations of the weights then in use, are become obsolete and unintelligible, there are three other tables existent successively made in the reigns of Q. Elizabeth, Q. Ann, and K. George 2. The sorts of bread are distinguished in all of them by the same names of White, Wheaten, and Household Bread. And the price of the quarter of wheat is severally made by them equal to the following weights of bread.

	White. Wheaten. Household.		
	lb.	lb.	lb.
By Q. Elizabeth's Table,*	276	415	553
By Table in Stat. 8 Ann, c. 18.	278	416	556
By Table in Stat. 31 Geo. 2 c. 29	271	370	494

* The Troy weight, used in this table is here reduced to *Aveirdupoise*, to compare it with the others.

If these weights of bread be reduced to the respective weights of flour from whence they are made by the proportion established in Stat. 31. *Geo.* 2. they will be as under.

	White. Wheaten. Houfhold.		
	<i>lb.</i>	<i>lb.</i>	<i>lb.</i>
By Q. <i>Elizabeth's</i> Table	221	334	445
By Table in 8 <i>Ann.</i> c. 18.	224	335	448
By Table in 31 <i>Geo.</i> 2. c. 29.	218	298	396

It hence appears, that the respective values of corn and the flour from whence white bread is made has remained the same from time immemorial*, and that no alteration took place in the proportions of the other two sorts of flour till the act passed in 31 *Geo.* 2. Whosoever looks back to the history of that period, and consults the Journals of the House of Commons, and there finds that petitions were presented from sundry places, praying relief from the high prices of bread corn, will be surpris'd that the legislature, in answer to these petitions, pass'd an act by which the weight of the twelve-penny loaf was diminish'd nearly one-eighth from what it should have been by the Stat. 8 *Ann* then in force: this will appear by the following comparison of the two tables.

* The small variations in the numbers arise from their being calculated from the weight of the penny loaf.

Weight of Twelve-penny Loaf.

Price of Bushel and Baking.	By Stat. 8 <i>Ann.</i>		By Stat. 31 <i>Geo.</i> 2.	
	Wheaten.	Houſhold.	Wheaten.	Houſhold.
<i>s. d.</i>	<i>lb. oz. dr.</i>	<i>lb. oz. dr.</i>	<i>lb. oz. dr.</i>	<i>lb. oz. dr.</i>
5 0	10 6 13	13 14 7	9 1 1	12 4 4
7 6	6 15 4	9 4 5	6 2 2	8 0 5
10 0	5 3 7	6 15 4	4 8 9	6 1 14
12 6	4 2 12	5 9 0	3 10 9	4 13 10

Now, I apprehend, this circumstance, which at first view has so odd an appearance, can no otherwise be accounted for than by attributing it to the effect of the innovation introduced into the bread laws by the Stat. of 8. *Ann.* While the price of the bushel of wheat remained the sole standard of the affize, both mealman and baker were obliged strictly to observe the proportions established, both as to price of flour and weight of bread. But no sooner was this standard rendered uncertain by directing the magistrates to have regard in fixing the affize, to the price of flour as well as to that of corn, than the mealman altered the fineness of his flour and enhanced its price, the change suited the palates of the consumers, the loaf was gradually diminished in weight though increased in fineness, till the magistrates were obliged to adopt an *imaginary* instead of the *real* price of wheat, to

make it agree with the price which flour bore in the market. So that the Stat. of *Geo. 2.* made no change in the price of bread in the metropolis, but only rendered the law conformable to the practice there prevalent. The case was different in the remoter parts of the kingdom, where luxury prevailing less, and the people retaining their old tastes and habits of life, the proportions of the Stat. of *Q. Ann* had been better observed; there the new act was not favorably received, and, though a school-boy at the time, I well remember the publication of a small tract, shewing how much the public were losers by the new regulations, which tended not to *lower*, but did actually *increase* the price of bread to the consumer. This instance should serve as a salutary caution of the dangers attending *every innovation* in laws respecting the general police of the nation. They are usually productive of inconveniencies, not foreseen, and difficult, when felt, to remove. “ When parliament in 1709, for the first time, instead of
 “ reducing the practice to the law, made the law
 “ to conform to the practice, they left the good
 “ sense, and forgot the justice of their ancestors:
 “ they repealed the old law and introduced confusion; which, with its train of perverse
 “ mischiefs, remains triumphant to this day.
 “ The millers no longer observe, in the manufacturing of flour, the making such sorts as
 “ the sorts of bread, directed by the law to be

“ made for sale, require; nor keep any pro-
 “ portion of price between the sorts of flour
 “ which they do make, and the price of the grain
 “ whereof it is made. The legislature, instead of
 “ assisting the magistrate, gave way and threw all
 “ open to the discretion and at the mercy of the
 “ mealman:—they emancipated one branch of
 “ the manufacture of bread from under the regu-
 “ lations of the assize, and yet assized the whole,
 “ when manufactured, at a fixed rate. The in-
 “ justice ends not in the injury done the baker,
 “ but becomes enormous, with added oppression,
 “ to the labouring classes of the people, by leaving
 “ the price of their sustenance at the discretion
 “ and mercy of the mealman*.” To this very
 intelligent writer I refer my readers, where they
 will find the subject fully discussed, and the ne-
 cessity of regulating sorts, goodness, and prices of
 flour, by an assize fully proved. A bill for that
 purpose was brought into the House of Commons
 in 1775, but the passing it suspended till the next
 sessions, “ in order to be considered by the mem-
 “ bers in the country consulting their constituents,
 “ and in order that being circulated, it might be
 “ submitted to examination, objections made to it
 “ considered, and improvements or amendment

* These passages are taken from a Pamphlet printed
 in 1795, entitled, *Considerations on the Scarcity and high Prices
 of Bread Corn and Bread, in a series of letters, supposed to
 be written by Governor POWNALL.*

“received.” But the price of corn falling the next year, the subject was not resumed in the ensuing sessions of parliament.

Two Acts have however passed, one prior and one subsequent to this attempt of obtaining a general law: the end of both which was the re-establishment of the assize table of *Q. Ann.*, without derogating from that of *Geo. 2.* The standard wheaten bread of 13 *Geo. 3. c. 62.* is no other than the wheaten bread in *Queen Ann's* table: and the household bread in the latter the same as the bread permitted to be made by *Stat. 36 Geo. 3. c. 22.* So that the laws now in force admit of five different sorts of bread to be made from wheat alone: a diversity which seems unnecessary: and it is humbly submitted to the consideration of the legislature, whether now that from an increased population and other concurrent causes, the average produce of the kingdom is no longer equal to its consumption, it would not be expedient wholly to repeal the statute of 31 *Geo. 2.* and to re-establish the assize of the former act of *Queen Ann.* Such a law, which seems necessary, not only as a *temporary* but as a *permanent* regulation, would considerably reduce the consumption, and *eight* bushels of wheat would be made to produce the same weight of bread as *nine* do now, at least in the metropolis and great towns where wheaten bread is chiefly eaten.

The author of the *CONSIDERATIONS* says, that
 “ the miller does not so divide the meal as to
 “ make the flour proper for the Standard Wheaten
 “ Bread, and that the bakers seem afraid that the
 “ people should ever know what it is *and how good*
 “ *it is.*” This may be the case in the metropolis,
 where there is a great and constant demand for the
 finer flours: but in the country, where the con-
 sumption of these is small, the greater part of the
 wheat is made into what is there called *SECONDS*,
 the price of which is always in the proportion
 which the statute directs for Standard Wheaten
 Bread; and the bread made from it is sold in
 quarter peck loaves, either at the prices in the
 table of 13 *Geo.* 3. or in some places at a lower
 rate. This was the practice in a district where I
 long resided, and it is but justice to the principal
 mealmen there to observe, that, during the scarcity
 of 1795, they were the protectors of the public,
 and exerted their utmost efforts to keep down the
 price of flour. The kingdom is now in similar
 distress, and it would have given me pleasure to have
 been able to make the same acknowledgement to
 those who supply the part of the country where
 I now live.

But to return to the more immediate conside-
 ration of the profit of the mealmen. The inno-
 vations gradually introduced by the trade in the
 manufactory of flour, have had one constant end

in view, the diverting the consumption altogether to the finer sorts, upon which their profit is the greatest. The consequence has been that the public is become accustomed to eat a finer sort of bread, for which they necessarily pay a higher price: more wheat is used; the increased demand raises the price of the grain, and still further enhances that of bread. Now the only remedy to an evil so frequently and so severely felt, is to tread back our steps, and to return to the plain simplicity of living of our ancestors: to petition the legislature to oblige the mealman to make such sorts of flour, and to sell them at such prices as may enable the baker to bake the several sorts of bread permitted by the Stat. of *Q. Ann.*, and to prohibit the making for sale any other bread whatever. While we persist in the use of fine bread, we shall, I apprehend, look in vain for a reduction in price.

A late worthy writer* has indeed opened to us ample resources in the reduction of the enormous profits made, as he says, by the mealman: the hopes he has excited will, I fear, prove fallacious. He argues thus. In the Stat. of 31 *Geo.* 2. the sack of wheaten flour is estimated of equal value with $7\frac{1}{2}$ bushels of wheat. But a sack of flour is made from 6 bushels only: therefore the mealman has

* Mr. Archdeacon HESLOP.

on every sack of flour a profit of one bushel and a half, or 25 per cent. the course of his trade enables him to make 12 returns in the year, his gains therefore at the end of the twelvemonth will be 300 per cent. or in other words he will have quadrupled the capital he employed. Without following the author through the intricate calculations from which he has drawn this conclusion, I apprehend an ordinary degree of attention to what passes round us, may convince us that no such profits are made. The experiments on which he rests do not appear conclusive: and the method he uses, in Chap. 2. § 4. of substituting one kind of flour for another, is liable to objection, because prices arbitrarily fixed* are no just criterion of real produce. I doubt the mealman cannot make 12 returns, and there are deductions of which Mr. HESLOP seems not aware, which considerably reduce his profits. The first erection of mills is very expensive, the repairs of them frequent and heavy, and their rents proportionably high. The allowance to the retailer, and I apprehend the baker has the same discount, when flour is at 45s. per sack, which may be deemed an average price, amounts to 5 per cent. So that the real profits of the trade must be very considerably under what Mr. HESLOP states them at. It is observable that in the Bill† brought into parliament

* I mean not by Mr. HESLOP, but the Mealmen.

† See the table of affize printed in the *Considerations*.

by Governor POWNALL in 1775, *for the due making of flour, and to regulate the sorts, goodnefs, and prices thereof, &c.* the price of the standard wheaten bore the same proportion to the price of wheat, as it does in Stat. 13 Geo. 3. and the prices of the two other sorts from which wheaten and household bread are made, were a trifle higher than in the proportions fixed by Stat. 31 Geo. 2. and therefore that honourable gentleman, who had paid great attention to the subject, and as Chairman of the Committee had ample means of information, must either have thought the profits of the mealman, as fixed by those statutes, reasonable, or deemed it hazardous and inexpedient to attempt their reduction. And yet when it is considered how long the present proportions have been established, (for the deviation in Stat. 31 Geo. 2. may be regarded as an alteration in fineness rather than in proportion) and that during a great part of the period the mealman, then the baker also, was subject to a heavy and often arbitrary toll in kind* upon grinding his corn; a burden from which the mealman is now exempt: and further, that more flour is now produced from a given quantity of wheat than could heretofore be done by the imperfect machinery then in use; the

* Suit at the lord's mill was one of the feudal services, and very rigidly exacted. See in *Annales de Dunstable*, an account of the Prior's breaking all the hand mills in town.

natural conclusion seems to be, that the mealman could now afford to sell his flour at a lower rate. But the validity of this conclusion should be confirmed by experiment before any alteration is attempted. The experiments hitherto made do not appear to me to be strictly applicable to the question. What seems in the first place wanting, is to oblige the mealman to make *such sorts of flour* as are requisite for the several sorts of bread permitted by the statutes; and in order to determine at what rates *such flours* should be sold, experiments should be made on the manufacturing of wheat into *those flours*, and not into *others* unsuitable for the purpose. But this is not to be expected from any private person, because flours not now usually made would with difficulty find a sale. A series of experiments might, however, be entered upon at the expense of Government, under the direction of the Commissioners of the Victualing Office, or of the Board of Agriculture.

Let the flour produced by a load of wheat be so divided into two equal parts, as to make two sorts of bread only, and let the dimensions of wire or cloth through which they pass be exactly fixed: it would be most beneficial to the public that these two sorts were the wheaten or household of old times*: but if the taste of the age be so vitiated

* That is what is now called Standard Wheaten, and the coarse Bread of 36 Geo. 3.

that waste must still accompany want, then the experiment must be directed to the wheaten and household bread of 31 *Geo.* 2. These flours being carefully weighed and prized in the proportion established by the tables, their aggregate value compared with the cost of the load of wheat will shew the mealman's profits; and the legislature will from thence be enabled to judge whether their profits are greater than they ought to be. One objection may be made to the criterion here proposed: that it supposes the mealman will find a market for equal quantities of both kinds of flour, which may well be doubted. Let then the experiments be made on one kind of flour only, and the enquiry be confined to the prices at which it may be sold: let the STANDARD bread be made of that flour: and at the same time that the law should permit two other sorts of bread, one finer and one coarser, to be made; the tables should be so constructed as to give the greatest profit both to mealman and baker on the Standard Bread. The contrary is the case with the present tables, so that both find their greatest advantage in the finer sorts, and neither the one will prepare flour, nor the other bake bread of the coarser.

CHAP. VIII.

*Plan of an Affize Table.*

WHENEVER the bread laws come under the consideration of parliament, it is to be hoped the result will be the reducing the several statutes now in force into one Act, by the regulations of which the mealman and the baker may be equally bound. Such a law would necessarily comprehend new tables of affize, one for regulating the price of flour, the other the price and weight of bread.

In fixing the prices of flour from those of the grain from whence it is made, the rule before given in p. 19. should be observed; and the prices should always be multiples of 20*d.* as is done in the London tables. One table would suffice for all the various flours and meals from whence bread is permitted to be made: the first column should contain the price of the *quarter* of corn, the following columns first the prices of flours made from wheat, and then of those prepared from other grain.

The allowance to the baker should be on the sack of flour, and not on the bushel of grain: that he may always have the same for baking an equal weight of flour of whatever kind it be, because his expenses are the same on the coarser as on the finer sorts. But under the statutes now in force the allowance being on the bushel, varies with the proportion the sack of flour bears to it. So that when this allowance is 1*s.* 6*d.* per bushel, whilst he receives 11*s.* 3*d.* on every sack of flour used for wheaten bread, this allowance is reduced to 10*s.* per sack in the standard wheaten bread, and to 8*s.* 5¼*d.* in household bread. And in bread from other grain the disproportion is still greater. For 1*s.* 6*d.* on the bushel would be 22*s.* on the sack of flour made from oats, and only 8*s.* 3*d.* on that made from beans. This ill-conveniency would be obviated by giving one fixt allowance on the sack of flour of every kind, which should always be a multiple of 20*d.*

The second table should have, in the first column, the price of the sack of flour and allowance for baking, and the succeeding columns first the prices of the priced loaves, and next the weights of the assized loaves.

The prices are very easily calculated, that of the peck loaf being always $\frac{1}{25}$ part of the sum in the

first column. To determine the weights of the affized loaves the act must first fix the weight of bread to be made from the sack of flour; I refer to what has been said in Chapter V. on the propriety of withdrawing the *thirteenth loaf* granted to the baker in the present tables, and compensating him by an increase in his allowance. The weight of bread to be made from the whole sack of flour being fixt, the weights of the several affized loaves should be calculated from it with accuracy and precision. A table thus constructed would serve for every denomination of bread.

Explanation of the Use of the proposed Tables.

To give an example of the use of these tables, I shall suppose them constructed on the same proportions as those now in force, and the several denominations of bread for which the affize is to be set the same as at present: the price of wheat returned to the magistrate to be 48s. the quarter, and the baker's allowance to be fixt at 13s. 4d. per sack.

From the first table I should find, that when the quarter of wheat is at 48s. the prices of the sack of flour are to be as follows:—

For Wheaten Bread 45s. to which add allowance for baking 13s. 4d. in all 58s. 4d.

For Standard Wheaten Bread 40s. making, with allowance, 53s. 4d.

For Household Bread 33s. 4d. making, with allowance, 46s. 8d.

Then in the second table opposite to 58s. 4d. would be found the prices and weights at which the Affize is to be set for Wheaten Bread: and opposite to 53s. 4d. and 46s. 8d. the respective prices and weights for the Affize of Standard Wheaten and Household Bread.





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